



Grade 6

Writing Curriculum

Oradell Public School District
Oradell, NJ

2024

The [Grade 6 Writing Curriculum](#) was developed by the Oradell Language Arts Curriculum Team and aligned to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS).

Oradell Public School District

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Board Policy

This revision is aligned with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Language Arts, the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Computer Science and Design Thinking, the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills, and the inclusion of connections of Social-Emotional Learning Competencies.

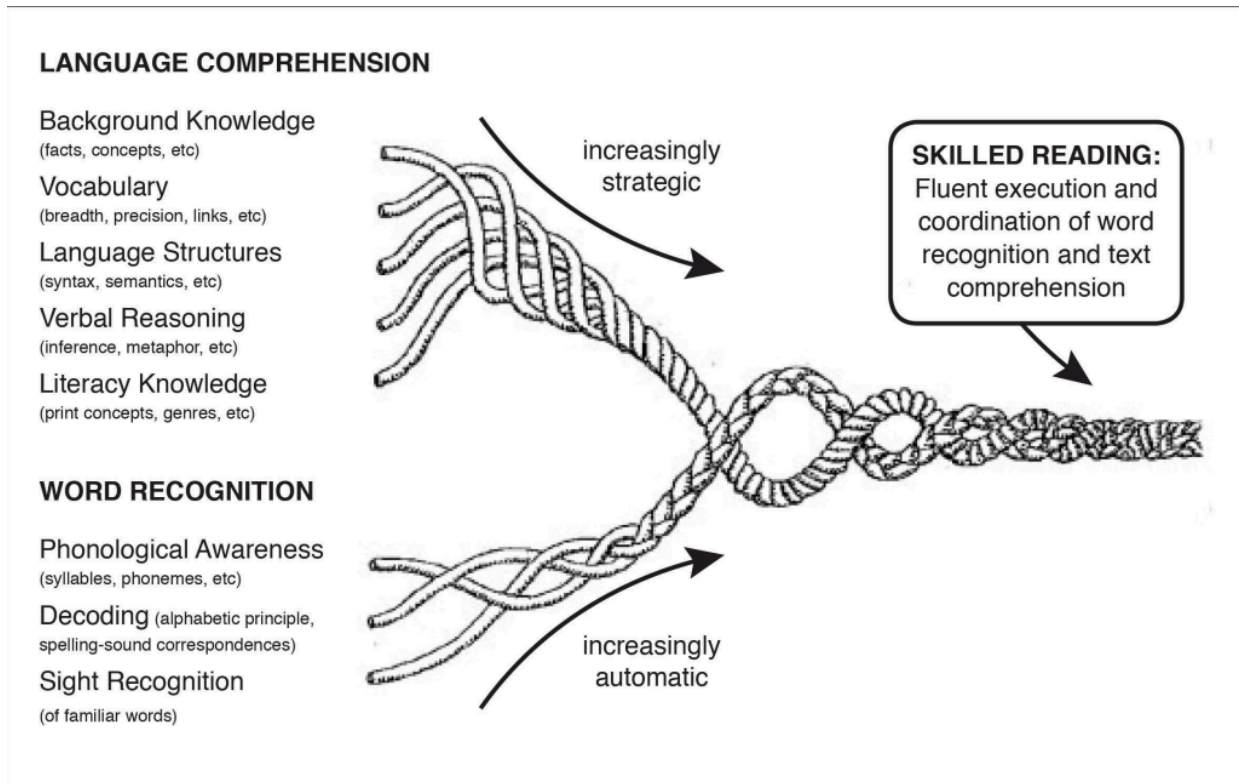
Affirmative Action

During the development of this course of study, particular attention was paid to the elimination or exclusion of any materials which might discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, familial status, genetic information, mental or physical disabilities, or in educational opportunities. Every effort has been made to uphold both the letter and spirit of Affirmative Action mandates as applied to the content, the texts and the instruction inherent in this course.

Megan Bozios, Superintendent
Michelle Hawley, Principal
Lorri-Anne Cummings, Director of Curriculum and Instruction

Our Language Arts Philosophy

We believe in a balanced approach to the teaching of language arts. We develop readers and writers to become thinkers and to develop strategies to become global citizens. We believe that readers need access to books that they find fascinating, time to read, and expert instruction (Richard Allington 2011). We believe that writers need time, choice, and feedback to be successful. The curriculum includes explicit instruction in language arts content through read alouds and vocabulary instruction that build background knowledge and schema. The units are built using research based strategies that promote literacy behaviors and skills that contribute to strategic thinking, reading, and writing. We have based the creation of this curriculum on the components of Scarborough's Rope, pictured below. Students need both strong language comprehension paired with word recognition to develop skilled reading (NJ Dyslexia Handbook, p. 20).



Reading Workshop

What is Reading Workshop?

Throughout the year, students will go on a literacy journey learning important skills that contribute to their lives as readers and writers in an ever-changing world. Within a workshop model, teachers implement standards-based minilessons to support whole class goals, followed by individualized small group work, conferences, and assessments that allow for a gradual release of responsibility and differentiated support and challenge for each student's individual learning needs. Ultimately, the workshop will close with a quick culminating group discussion that reviews the teaching point of the lesson while providing an opportunity for students to share their learning and process.

Minilesson

Each reading workshop lesson begins with explicit instruction in a mini lesson. During each minilesson, the teacher introduces a specific concept, also known as the teaching point. Most often, the teaching point focuses on a reading skill and strategy. The teacher will explicitly model or demonstrate the skill for the students. Skills are explicitly modeled during minilessons. The mini lesson has four parts: the connection, the teach (demonstration), the active engagement and the link. The teacher chooses a skill and strategy that the class needs based on classroom assessments. During the connection portion of the lesson, the teacher connects prior learning to the current skill. The teacher announces the teaching point: the skill and strategy being taught. In this approach, the teacher shows students how to accomplish the skill by modeling the strategy in a book with which the students are familiar. The teacher also uses a think-aloud. This method shows students how to think about the text and then allows them to work this out in their own books or a shared text during the active engagement portion of the mini lesson. During the link portion of the minilesson, the teacher reminds students about the strategies they can use while they are reading.

Reading Aloud

At Oradell Public School, we value the importance of reading aloud as a time for teachers to model reading with expression, fluency, intonation, and good pacing. Instructional read-alouds promote strategic reading, where students must draw upon their full toolbox of reading knowledge. Most importantly, read-aloud time should promote the joy of reading, thinking, sharing, and learning. The read-alouds in our curriculum are carefully chosen in order to expose students to topics that will develop their knowledge more deeply. These mentor texts find their way into many lessons as the year unfolds and serve as a model for student self-discovery within their own texts.

Interactive Read-Aloud

An interactive read-aloud consists of a series of purposeful activities that engage the class in the book and the strategies that surround it. The following list contains the many parts of an interactive read-aloud:

- Scaffolding on prior knowledge
- Modeling vocabulary development
- Teaching reading fluency
- Emphasizing elements of the story
- Asking purposeful questions
- Using think-alouds to assist comprehension
- Summarizing the story to bring closure

Texts used during the interactive read-aloud should be chosen from a wide variety of genres. They should tap into the readers' interests and be full of rich vocabulary.

Shared Reading

Shared Reading is an interactive reading experience that occurs when students join in or share the reading of a book or other text while guided and supported by a teacher. The teacher explicitly models the skills of proficient readers, including reading with fluency and expression

Independent Reading and Book Clubs

Research suggests that a high volume of reading improves reading comprehension. Furthermore, research suggests that students comprehend better when they have an opportunity to discuss their reading content and process. Specific class time is reserved for independent reading, partner reading, guided reading and/or

book club reading followed by occasions to talk about texts in student partnerships, small groups, and whole group settings.

Through book clubs, readers will raise the level of conversation about literature. Students will recognize that readers have different viewpoints, and they will defend their claims with reasons and evidence. Students will use everything they know about characters to dig deeper and develop the theme and its complexity. Students will begin to write and think analytically as they interpret literature within their book clubs to link ideas and build larger theories about texts.

Accountable talk is a strategy that supports students' academic language development through discussion by giving students key phrases they can use when learning skills such as explaining, agreeing, disagreeing, and justifying.

Teachers conduct the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) in grades K-5 three times a year to gather benchmark data. Teachers use this data to develop targeted small group and individual instruction. In addition, grades 2-6 teachers will use a homegrown reading assessment to gather more information about the student as a reader to best support continued growth on their trajectory of reading.

Reading Conferences

In a reading conference, teachers check-in with individual students (or small groups of students with a specific and similar learning need) on their reading interests and progress. After listening to a student read a portion of a text aloud or asking specific teacher-driven questions, teachers will work to:

1. Compliment the student(s).
2. Provide an explicit teaching point.
3. Coach the student as he/she works to apply the skill/strategy.

Teachers take anecdotal notes on conferences as formative assessment data to drive subsequent conferences and small group work. Each conference or small group lesson focuses on a particular reading strategy to learn more about individual student reading needs within the small group setting.

Reading Strategy Groups

Teachers may gather strategy groups when students at various levels need support with a specific skill. In strategy groups, students may be reading at different independent reading levels, however, the students may be gesturing toward a similar next step in reading skill work. For example, teachers may gather a group of students based on similar noticings on formative assessments.

Close Reading

Close reading is a rereading of a short passage looking at specific details to deepen comprehension. It promotes higher order thinking in relation to the text by determining importance and analyzing select passages and excerpts.

Writing Workshop

What is Writing Workshop?

The writing workshop framework is used for writing instruction. This is the daily block of time devoted to teaching students to become skilled writers. Each Writing Workshop lesson begins with explicit instruction in

a curriculum driven minilesson that is grounded in a clear teaching point. After the minilesson, individual writing conferences take place while the majority of the students are writing independently. This structure allows teachers to truly get to know each child as an author, and then to provide ongoing support for each child's writing.

Minilesson

Writing workshop begins with a minilesson, a short whole class lesson in which the teacher teaches students something about writing (Anderson 2005). The majority of the class time is spent with students practicing the skill and strategy work that was introduced during minilessons, small group work, and/or shared writing. The teacher gradually releases responsibility to students with strategic levels of support.

Writing Conferences

While students write, teachers move around the classroom conducting writing conferences. In these one-on-one conversations, teachers teach each student about an aspect of writing that meets that students' needs as a writer (Anderson 2005). According to Lucy Calkins, a writing conference should contain the following parts:

1. Research: Observe and note something to praise and something to grow.
2. Decide: Determine the teaching point.
3. Teach: Coach a part of the student's writing process.
4. Link: Remind the student to use his/her new skills as an author in future writing endeavors.

Anecdotal records of writing conferences are used to compile all of the useful information collected. The conference notes are an effective tool to help identify trends in each child's writing and assess his/her growth as a writer. Conference notes provide formative assessment data for subsequent individual and small group instruction. (See below for Carl Anderson's example of a writing conference form.)

Assessment Notes for _____ Date _____

What am I learning about this student as a writer?	What do I need to teach this student?

Ⓢ is the symbol for Teaching Point. © is the symbol for Instructional Goal.
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14 Strategic Writing Conferences: Teacher's Guide

Writing Strategy Groups

Teachers may convene strategy groups when students at various levels need support with a specific writing

skill. This is an effective format when a small group of students is struggling with the same writing skill and the teacher can target that particular group.

Independent Writing

This is the time when students practice the skill taught during the minilesson with their own writing. Students are encouraged to write with independence, focus, and stamina in order to produce writing in volume.

Writing Share

Ultimately, the lesson will close with a culminating group discussion that reviews the teaching point of the lesson while providing an opportunity for students to share their learning and process.

Interactive Writing (K-1)

Interactive writing supports foundational skills for young writers. In this lesson structure, teacher and students compose a message together and the pen is shared. This type of work supports concepts of print, sound-symbol relationships, increases spelling knowledge, and provides opportunities to plan and construct text in a shared writing setting (Fountas & Pinnell, 2001). Unlike independent writing, where students spell using a developing understanding of sound-symbol relationships (i.e. inventive spelling), interactive writing models correct writing conventions. In other words, if the students do not know a writing convention rule, the teacher delivers it explicitly in the creation of the shared text.

Shared Writing (K-6)

Teacher and students work together to compose written texts that support the current genre/unit of study. This demonstrates how writing works, provides opportunities to model spelling strategies, revision work, and editing strategies. The students are brought through the writing process together. This also provides an exemplar to post in the classroom for reference.

What is the difference between revising and editing?

Revising and editing are not the same part of the writing process. When revising, the author is changing the meaning or way in which the reader perceives, experiences and interprets a piece of writing. This can be accomplished by adding new thoughts, clarifying existing thoughts, choosing more descriptive words, improving overall understanding of ideas presented, enhancing character development, adding more detail, or eliminating unnecessary elements.

When editing, the overall piece remains exactly the same, but the writer fixes the mistakes they have made, such as typos, grammatical errors, and spelling mistakes. This is an ideal point in the unit to teach grammar lessons, as students can apply what they learn to their own pieces of writing.

Word Study

Oradell Public School District utilizes an integrated approach to word study. Although word study is embedded in the various reading and writing workshop lessons, time is reserved for word study activities and assessments during the literacy block. Word study time begins in Kindergarten with early literacy concepts, phonics/word work, and handwriting activities and evolves toward work in spelling, grammar, and vocabulary.

Phonological and Phonemic Awareness for Kindergarten and Grade 1

Heggerty Phonological and Phonemic Awareness

Teachers in grades K-1 use Heggerty to teach phonological and/or phonemic awareness skills daily including Rhyme, Phoneme Isolation, Blending, Segmenting, and Manipulation. Students will also practice 2-3 early literacy skills, including building alphabet knowledge, language awareness, and phoneme-grapheme connections. Teachers implement Heggerty as an oral and auditory warm-up to phonics instruction. Explicit phonemic awareness instruction provides a foundation for students to anchor their reading and writing skills during phonics instruction.

Phonics Resource for Primary Grades

Oradell Public School is implementing the Wilson Foundations program in our K-3 classrooms. Teachers will use the Foundations materials during their literacy block to build students' phonics/vocabulary skills. Through Foundations, emerging readers review letters, their sounds, and how to form them, along with strategies for segmenting and blending words as they try to read and spell them. They also learn about many aspects of word and sentence structure. Echo, an owl puppet children love, encourages them as they learn through repetition, build sounds and words with magnet letters, and engage in other visual, auditory, oral, and kinesthetic activities that foster literacy.

Word Study in the Upper Grades

Students in grades 4-6 engage in multiple ways into a deeper study of vocabulary. Word study provides students with opportunities to investigate and understand the patterns in words. Knowledge of these patterns means that students needn't learn to spell one word at a time. Word study is also designed to build word knowledge that can be applied to both reading and spelling. Students learn Tier 2 and Tier 3 words through read alouds and have opportunities to engage in authentic practice with the words to gain a deeper understanding and application in their writing. The more students understand academic vocabulary, the easier it is for them to understand the information they may read or hear about a topic (Marzano 2005).

Grammar

Oradell Public School District believes in an embedded and a blend of an explicit and inquiry-based approach. With this in mind, we incorporated a [grammar skills continuum](#) created by Patty McGee of grammar and mechanics skills that will be taught at each grade level. The continuum suggests mini lessons that include a gradual release model of immersion, focus area, and transfer.

All About the Language Arts Curriculum

How was the curriculum developed?

The Oradell Public School District's curriculum consists of reading and writing units that have been inspired by both the Science of Reading and the work of Jennifer Serravallo and Patty McGee. Please see the "Professional References" section for specific books used. Additionally, writing rubrics for narrative, informational, and opinion writing are provided. The OPS rubrics have been linked to the document as Google Docs for ease of use; teachers can make a copy and revise for specific units as needed. Teachers are encouraged to collaborate to create additional minilessons and formative assessments for the whole group, small-group, and individual conferences.

Each unit contains modules with corresponding WALT statements (We are learning to/that) that serve as teaching points or learning objectives. A module is the section of each unit that groups particular teaching points. A WALT statement addresses both the skill and strategy that will be practiced in a given reading or writing block followed with a “by” which indicates how the objective is to be met. The WALT statements in the curriculum are directly connected to the standards. There are often a variety of ways to achieve the WALT statement which is meant as a menu of options and are chosen based on assessment and student data

Modifications

The modifications section at the end of each bend is meant to help guide the differentiation of the units for students with IEPs, English Language Learners, Tier 2 At-Risk students (students in Basic Skills) and Gifted and Talented students. Carol Ann Tomlinson defines differentiation as tailoring instruction to meet individual needs. Whether teachers differentiate content, process, products, or the learning environment, the use of ongoing assessment and flexible grouping makes this a successful approach to instruction. At its most basic level, differentiation consists of the efforts of teachers to respond to variance among learners in the classroom. Whenever a teacher reaches out to an individual or small group to vary his or her teaching in order to create the best learning experience possible, that teacher is differentiating instruction (Tomlinson 2000).

Teachers can differentiate at least four classroom elements based on student readiness, interest, or learning profile:

1. Content: what the student needs to learn or how the student will get access to the information
2. Process: activities in which the student engages in order to make sense of or master the content
3. Products: culminating projects that ask the student to rehearse, apply, and extend what he or she has learned in a unit
4. Learning environment: the way the classroom works and feels

Professional References

- Fountas, I. & Pinnell, G.S. (2016). *The Fountas & Pinnell Literacy Continuum, Expanded Edition: A Tool for Assessment, Planning, and Teaching, PreK-8*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
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- McGee, Patti (2020). *Grammar Study: Micro-Workshop*. New Rochelle, NY: Benchmark Education Company
- Serravallo, J. (2023). *The Reading Strategies Book 2.0: Your Research-Based Guide to Developing Skilled Readers 1st Edition*, Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
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- Tomlinson, C. A. (August, 2000). *Differentiation of Instruction in the Elementary Grades*. ERIC Digest. ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education.



Oradell Public School District

Suggested Pacing Guide for Reading & Writing Units

Grade Six

Unit	Approximate Month	Reading Unit	Writing Unit	Grammar Skill
1	September-October	Reflecting on Themselves as Readers	<u>NARRATIVE</u> <u>Establishing Personal Goals</u> & Realistic Fiction through Theatre	-Conversational/ Interrupted dialogue -Commas in a series -Independent clauses -Figurative language
2	November-December	FICTION Character Analysis and Literary Elements in Short Stories	<u>OPINION</u> <u>Literary Essay & Compare and Contrast Themes in Literature</u>	-Dependent clauses
3	December -January	FICTION Comparing Themes in Literature	<u>INFORMATIONAL</u> <u>Bringing History to Life</u>	-Compound sentences (<i>nor, for, yet</i>)
4	February- March	NONFICTION Tapping into the Power of Nonfiction	<u>OPINION</u> <u>Comparing and Contrasting Main Ideas and Perspectives in Informational Texts</u>	-Run-ons and sentence fragments -Appositive sentences
5	April - May	STANDARDIZED TEST PREP Reading, Thinking, and Writing About Complex Texts	<u>OPINION</u> <u>The Research-based Argumentative Essay Debating Global Issues</u>	-Objective, possessive, subjective pronouns
6	May - June	FICTION Analyzing Social Issues Through Book Clubs	<u>NARRATIVE</u> <u>Memoir</u>	-Intensive pronouns -Inappropriate shifts in pronouns -Correct vague pronouns

Note: Highlighted activities indicate Holocaust Awareness, Amistad Commission, or Asian American Pacific Islander legislation related activities.

Sixth Grade Writing Curriculum

Unit 1 Narrative: Establishing Personal Goals & Realistic Fiction Through Theatre

Unit Overview

In the *Establishing Personal Goals & Realistic Fiction Through Theatre* writing unit, students will establish their independent writing lives as sixth graders. This unit is designed to set up routines, reflect on experiences as writers, use them to set goals, and begin to look at narrative techniques. Once writers set goals and look at examples of realistic fiction, they will have the opportunity to pull together all of the skills they have been acquiring as readers to immerse themselves in the theatre standards. They will be given short scenarios in which two characters are in opposition; they will discuss the backstory and what they know about each character's perspective. They will then actively contribute ideas and work in groups to develop a script, using their schema to illustrate their knowledge and understanding of the scenario and the characters. Once guided drama experiences are created, students will rehearse. As they rehearse, they will incorporate technical theatre elements, technology, costumes, props, and the ability to bring characters to life through their bodies and words. Students will identify, explore, and imagine multiple staging problems and potential solutions. Once they have created and rehearsed their scripts, they will perform for their peers. After performances, students will reflect through personal and peer feedback. They will justify and assess their aesthetic and theatrical choices. Lastly, students will discuss why they chose characters to act and speak in the way that they did. They will share how their personal experiences influenced their perspective as an audience member and as a performer. At the conclusion of the theatre work, students will have a much better feel for how to successfully portray the emotions, feelings, and well-being of characters. This will transfer to the realistic fiction unit as students start to brainstorm believable problems that will fuel the creation of a realistic fiction story, which contains believable characters, settings, conflicts, themes, and plots. Writers will emphasize how external forces affect characters internally. They will recognize that strong, believable stories often have failed resolutions since characters do not always fully solve problems. It is within those character experiences that the reader can learn a lesson. Writers will draft their stories with the ending in mind by finding a realistic resolution to a conflict. As students draft, they will continuously revise and edit for grammar and mechanics. Writers will strive to include conversational dialogue and interrupted dialogue in their stories. During the editing stage of the writing process, they will focus on independent clauses and commas in a series. Writers will celebrate by publishing their work and sharing with their peers. Finally, writers will revisit their goals and reflect on new goals for the future.

Enduring Understandings

Writers will:

- Establish their independent writing lives for the year.
- Revisit the routines and structures of the writing workshop.
- Immerse themselves in the realistic fiction genre by reading closely.
- Use their imaginations to plan a script performance based on a short teacher provided scenario.
- Use their schemas to bring the conflicts and characters to life.
- Create the props, costumes, scenery, and technological theatrical choices for a performance.
- Anticipate multiple staging problems and identify potential solutions.
- Reflect on their experience as a character in the skit and as a member of the audience.
- Gain an understanding that theatre artists rely on intuition, curiosity, and critical inquiry to make decisions in their performances and convey meaning in the theatrical work.

- Use the writing process to develop authentic writing.
- Think about real-life conflicts and struggles that they face in order to brainstorm ideas.
- Use mentor texts to brainstorm ideas.
- Balance thought, action, and dialogue.
- Draw on their knowledge of how realistic fiction stories function in order to create believable plots.
- Use their knowledge of the narrative structure to enhance their stories.
- Develop believable characters, settings, and plots.
- Develop a strong internal and external conflict that make sense together.
- Use a mixture of story elements to show what is happening.
- Craft realistic resolutions that lend themselves to powerful messages and themes.
- Use a combination of dependent clauses and figurative language to enhance their stories
- Zoom in on a specific moment and use sensory details, internal thoughts, and dialogue to stretch out the important parts.
- Develop a strong climax that leads to the character learning an important lesson.
- Write about the way they personally endured a conflict and overcame it.
- Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
- Apply technology to enhance meaning.
- Use conversational dialogue and interrupted dialogue to enhance conversations between characters.
- Use commas in a series and independent clauses.
- Publish and celebrate their writing.

Assessments

Pre-assessment	Post-assessment
<p>Writing Prompt: <i>“I’m really eager to understand what you can do as writers of fiction stories, so today, will you please write the best realistic fiction story that you can write? This should be the story of one time in a character’s life. You might focus on just a scene or two. You’ll have only 45 minutes to write this fiction story, so you’ll need to plan, draft, revise and edit in one sitting. Write in a way that allows you to show off all you know about narrative writing. In your writing, make sure you:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Write a beginning for your story.</i> ● <i>Use transition words to tell what happened in order.</i> ● <i>Elaborate to help readers picture your story.</i> ● <i>Show what your story is really about.</i> ● <i>Write an ending for your story.”</i> <p>Score using the OPS Rubric for Narrative Writing Grade 6</p>	<p>Writing Prompt: <i>“I’m really eager to understand what you can do as writers of fiction stories, so today, will you please write the best realistic fiction story that you can write? This should be the story of one time in a character’s life. You might focus on just a scene or two. You’ll have only 45 minutes to write this fiction story, so you’ll need to plan, draft, revise and edit in one sitting. Write in a way that allows you to show off all you know about narrative writing. In your writing, make sure you:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Write a beginning for your story.</i> ● <i>Use transition words to tell what happened in order.</i> ● <i>Elaborate to help readers picture your story.</i> ● <i>Show what your story is really about.</i> ● <i>Write an ending for your story.”</i> <p>Score using the OPS Rubric for Narrative Writing Grade 6</p>

Adapted from *Writing Pathways* by Lucy Calkins (page 182)

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Possible Ongoing Assessments

- Teacher observation
- Student participation
- Guided drama experience performances
- Theatrical peer and self reflections
- Individual writing conferences
- Small strategy groups
- Writing partners
- Writer's notebook entries
- Post-its
- On-demand writing
- Working drafts
- Create a character
- Published pieces assessed with the [OPS Rubric for Narrative Writing Grade 6](#)

Standards (NJSL) Addressed in this Unit

Reading

RL.CI.6.2. Determine the theme of a literary text (e.g., stories, plays or poetry) and explain how it is supported by key details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

RI.CI.6.2. Determine the central idea of an informational text, and explain how it is supported by key details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

Writing

W.NW.6.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

- Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
- Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
- Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.
- Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events.
- Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.

W.WP.6.4. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning; flexibly making editing and revision choices; sustaining effort to fit composition needs and purposes; and attempting to address purpose and audience.

W.RW.6.7. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

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

Speaking & Listening

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

- A. Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
- B. Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
- C. Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion.
- D. Review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing.

Language

L.SS.6.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

- A. Ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, possessive).
- B. Use intensive pronouns (e.g. myself, ourselves).
- C. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.
- D. Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).
- E. Recognize variations from standard English in their own and others' writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.

L.KL.6.2. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

- A. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases.
- B. Gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.
- C. Vary sentence patterns for meaning (syntax), reader/listener interest, and style/voice.
- D. Maintain consistency in style and tone.

L.VI.6.3. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

- A. Use context (e.g. the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
- B. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g. audience, auditory, audible).
- C. Consult reference materials (e.g. dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.
- D. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g. by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

L.VI.6.4. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

- A. Interpret figures of speech (e.g. personification) in context.
- B. Use the relationship between particular words (e.g. cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words.
- C. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g. stingy, scrimping, economical, un wasteful, thrifty).

Theatre

Creating

1.4.8.Cr1a: Identify, explore and imagine multiple solutions and strategies in staging problems in a theatrical work.

1.4.8.Cr1b: Identify, imagine and practice solving multiple design/technical challenges of a performance space in a theatrical work.

1.4.8.Cr1c: Explore, describe, and develop given circumstances of a scripted or improvised character in a theatrical work.

1.4.8.Cr2a: Articulate and apply critical analysis, extensive background knowledge, sociohistorical research, and cultural context related to existing or developing original theatrical work.

1.4.8.Cr2b: Actively contribute ideas and creatively incorporate the ideas of others in existing or original theatrical work, demonstrating mutual respect for self and others and their roles sharing leadership and responsibilities in preparing or devising theatre.

1.4.8.Cr3a: Demonstrate focus and concentration in the rehearsal process by analyzing and refining choices in a devised or scripted theatre performance.

1.4.8.Cr3b: Implement and refine a planned technical design using simple technology during the rehearsal process for devised or scripted theatre work.

1.4.8.Cr3c: Develop effective physical and vocal traits of characters in an improvised or scripted theatrical work.

Performing

1.4.8.Pr4a: Rehearse a variety of acting techniques to increase skills in a rehearsal or theatrical performance that assist in the development of stronger character choices.

1.4.8.Pr4b: Use a variety of technical elements to create a design for a rehearsal or theatre production.

1.4.8.Pr5a: Examine how character relationships assist in telling the story of devised or scripted theatre work.

1.4.8.Pr5b: Use various character objectives and tactics in a theatre work to identify the conflict and overcome the obstacle.

1.4.8.Pr6a: Perform a rehearsed theatrical work for an audience

Responding

1.4.8.Re7a: Describe and record personal reactions to artistic choices in a theatrical work.

1.4.8.Re7b: Compare recorded personal and peer reactions to artistic choices in a theatrical work.

1.4.8.Re8a: Investigate various critique methodologies and apply the knowledge to respond to a theatrical work.

1.4.8.Re8b: Justify the aesthetic choices created through the use of production elements in a theatrical work.

1.4.8.Re8c: Assess the impact of a theatrical work on a specific audience.

1.4.8.Rea: Analyze how personal experiences affect artistic choices in a theatrical work.

1.4.8.Re9b: Identify and interpret how different cultural perspectives influence the evaluation of theatrical work.

1.4.8.Re9c: Examine how the use of personal aesthetics, preferences and beliefs can be used to discuss a theatrical work

Computer Science and Design Thinking

8.2.8.ED.5: Explain the need for optimization in a design process.

Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills

9.4.8.GCA.1: Model how to navigate cultural differences with sensitivity and respect (e.g., 1.5.8.C1a).
 9.4.8.GCA.2: Demonstrate openness to diverse ideas and perspectives through active discussions to achieve a group goal.

Practices

CLKSP1 Act as a responsible and contributing community member and employee.
 CLKSP4 Demonstrate creativity and innovation.
 CLKSP8 Use technology to enhance productivity, increase collaboration and communicate effectively.
 CLKSP9 Work productively in teams while using cultural/global competence.

Interdisciplinary Connections

Comprehensive Health Physical Education

2.1.8.EH.2: Analyze how personal attributes, resiliency, and protective factors support mental and emotional health.
 2.1.8.SSH.4: Compare and contrast the characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships.

Theatre

1.4.8.Cr3c: Develop effective physical and vocal traits of characters in an improvised or scripted theatrical work.

Unit 1 Narrative: Establishing Personal Goals & Realistic Fiction Through Theatre
Suggested Teaching Points

Unit 1/Bend 1: Launching Independent Writing Lives

Writers will set up their independent writing lives by...

- Establishing writing goals for the year.
- Developing a timeline explaining the kind of writer they have been over the years.
- Identifying ways they can use their writer’s notebook.
- Sharing their writing personality with classmates by interviewing one another.
- Decorating their writer’s notebooks with pictures and images that are important to them to inspire entries.
- Using authors as mentors to get ideas.
- Knowing ways to be resourceful when struggling to get ideas:
 - Look back at your writing notebook.
 - Look back at anchor charts.
 - Ask your writing partner.
 - Look at previous work (teacher or partner).
 - Refer to vocabulary resources.
- Working together in partnerships to build a writing community by telling stories.
- Establishing partnerships to fuel collaborative thinking.

Unit 1/Bend 2: Generating Realistic Story Ideas and Immersing in the Genre

Writers will immerse

- Reading examples of realistic fiction stories.

<p><i>themselves in the genre by...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Taking notice of the types of conflicts characters are typically facing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Character vs. Character ○ Character vs. Self ○ Character vs. Society ○ Character vs. Nature ● Comparing and contrasting personal narratives and realistic fiction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Believable characters ○ Believable settings ○ Believable conflicts ○ Believable solutions ○ Believable plots ○ Believable themes
<p><i>Writers will collect and rehearse story ideas by...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Thinking about the types of problems that characters typically experience: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Character vs. Character ○ Character vs. Self ○ Character vs. Society ○ Character vs. Nature ● Thinking about the types of problems they experience in their lives and in the world. ● Thinking about stories they wish existed in the world. ● Thinking about issues they have faced and the moments they faced those issues. ● Thinking about moments that really matter. ● Writing small scenes to bring out the personality of the main characters by showing not only what they did, but also how they did it. ● Creating maps and images to remind them of important times, people, and places: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Writing heart ○ Neighborhood that outlines important places ○ “I Am” map ○ “Shoe” map ● Flash drafting their ideas. ● Looking within the pages of their writer’s notebooks to develop ideas. ● Thinking about important people, places, moments, animals that are important to them. ● Thinking about the types of stories that authors typically write about. ● Thinking about stories that show a glimpse into their hearts and who they are as people. ● Thinking of a strong emotion (grief, joy, frustration) and when they experienced that emotion. ● Sharing ideas and stories with partners. ● Planning and organizing their ideas for the story: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Utilizing an internal and external timeline
<p><i>Writers will use their ideas to plan and create believable plots by...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understanding that good characters have both external and internal problems that relate to one another: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Asking, “How does this external force affect how the character feels internally?”

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Planning for how their characters will face these problems. ● Thinking about how the character will resolve the problem while keeping the overall theme in mind. ● Realizing that characters do not always solve problems right away. They try and try until they succeed—sometimes. ● Realizing that sometimes characters need an outside force, or words of the wise, to help them solve a problem. ● Realizing that sometimes characters do what is right, not what is easy, by looking within themselves. ● Understanding that all of the components of the plot mesh together. ● Creating characters that have strong back stories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What is their family like? ○ What is their personality like? ○ What do they like/dislike? ○ What do they do for fun? ● Keeping the end in mind by constantly thinking about the theme. ● Asking, “What broad idea about life do I want my character to learn?” ● Thinking about how a character will react and change due to the problem in the story. ● Thinking about what they want readers to take away from the story. ● Using a graphic organizer to plan for all of their story elements, either on google classroom or in their notebooks.
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Unit 1/Bend 3: Moving Through the Writing Process Toward Goals

<p><i>Writers will draft with a strong purpose in meaningful ways by...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Crafting a lead that draws readers to the heart of the story. ● Flash drafting: getting the whole story on the page in one sitting. ● Working steadfastly toward goals. ● Carrying everything they’ve learned into new writing situations. ● Keeping their writing tools close at hand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Writer’s notebook ○ Anchor charts ○ Mentor texts ● Using writer’s notebooks for mindful, goal-driven work. ● Re-angling and rewriting to convey what a story is <i>really</i> about. ● Elaborating on the important scenes and adding new ones. ● Balancing thought, action and dialogue in their writing, making sure they have these three dimensions. ● Highlighting/underlining specific elements in their writing to make sure they have included everything. ● Experimenting and writing about multiple different moments and stories within their writer’s notebook. ● Slowing down the dramatic parts and speeding up the less important ones. ● Using transitions to get from one thought to the next. ● Focusing on the organization of the story: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A new character comes along (new speaker new line). ○ A new event happens. ○ A new idea is introduced.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The setting changes. ○ A new person is speaking. ○ Time moves forward or backward a lot. ○ The camera moves. ● Showing the reader what is happening instead of just telling them: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Using figurative language ○ Avoiding forms of the verb, <i>to be</i> (I am, I was, I have been, we are, is being) ○ Using descriptive words (sensory details) ○ Using strong and precise verbs ○ Naming things ● Convincing the reader, so that the reader believes they were there. ● Using scripts from theatrical works as a model for including strong sensory details in writing to ensure the reader is able to understand the author’s intent of the character. ● Including sensory details: “What were your feet doing? Ears hearing? Eyes seeing?” ● Show the characters internal characteristics using indirect characterization: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How do they act? ○ What do they say? ○ What do they think? ○ What do other secondary characters think about them? ● Showing the passing of time: clock ticking, sun going down ● Realizing that sometimes writers exaggerate to emphasize a point. ● Reflecting on the character’s emotional journey by including dramatic elements. (e.g. foreshadowing, flashback, mood, tone, and symbolism) ● Choosing titles that are doorways into the story. ● Constantly revising for meaning.
<p><i>Writers will continue to draft their stories, keeping the end in mind by...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stopping and thinking about where the story is heading and how they will get there. ● Crafting strong endings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tie up the loose ends ○ Leave the reader thinking ○ Teach the reader something about the writer ● Creatively passing the time. ● Stretching out important parts and moving quickly through the less important parts. ● Using story time transitions. ● Using dialogue as a powerful story element. ● Avoiding the obvious solution. ● Concentrating on an ending that realistically resolves the conflict. ● Choosing titles that act as doorways into the story: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The title can refer to a specific event ○ The title should relate to the heart of the story ● Organizing an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.

Unit 2/Bend 4: Editing and Revising with an Eye Toward Publication

Writers will edit and revise in purposeful ways by...

- Taking the beginning of class (the first ten minutes, or so) to review already completed work before adding new details.
- Discussing the difference between revising and editing, and making sure they are doing both.
- Reading their story out loud, so they can listen for any errors.
- Revising with writing partners.
- Providing suggestions and feedback to classmates.
- Continuing to look at mentor texts for ideas.
- Checking for spelling, capitalization, punctuation and grammar.
- Using punctuation and formatting while editing for clarity and variety:
 - Commas, semicolons, colons, dashes, ellipses, italics, capitalization, spacing
- Using peer checklists to assess writing.
- Using the writing rubric to self-assess
- Using all available resources to aid with final touches.

Writers will prepare for publication by...

- Creating opportunities for writers to rethink their writing.
- Inviting them to publish their stories as illustrated books.
- Reading excerpts of their story aloud.
- Leading an outdoor reading series.
- Preparing thoughtful compliments and feedback for their peers.

Unit 1: Grammar/Mechanics

Conversational Dialogue & Interrupted Dialogue

Example: "He loved you," she said, "but you didn't care."

Writers will understand conversational dialogue and interrupted dialogue by...

- Analyzing and discussing examples and nonexamples.
- Identifying the details within dialogue punctuation in narrative text.
- Applying these strategies to their own writing pieces.

Commas in a Series

Example: Margaret would love to make you a chicken, lettuce, and tomato sandwich for lunch.

Writers will understand commas in a series by...

- Analyzing and discussing examples and nonexamples.
- Identifying the different reasons for this type of comma.
- Applying these strategies to their own writing pieces.

Independent Clauses

Example: John likes to go to school.

Subject + Predicate = Independent Clause

Writers will understand independent clauses by...

- Analyzing and discussing examples and nonexamples.
- Identifying the difference between punctuation for each type of work.
- Applying these strategies to their own writing pieces.

Figurative Language

Example: Time flies when you're having fun.

Writers will understand figurative language by...

- Analyzing and discussing examples and nonexamples.
- Identifying figurative language within their reading.
- Applying these strategies to their own writing pieces.

Suggested Modifications

These strategies can be adapted to scaffold for students needing more support or extend the learning for higher-level students. Differentiation is accomplished through content, process, product and learning environment.

Special Education Students

- Use various methods to understand a student's learning style: observation, surveys, and conferring
- Refer to student IEP for goals and modifications.
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge.
- Use pre-assessment data to drive instruction.
- Use preferential seating.
- Use flexible grouping.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer's current level.
- Model productive and engaging partner talk.
- Allow for extended time.
- Provide guided notes as necessary.
- Set a writing goal for an assignment and then focus only on that goal.
- Allow students to type.
- Allow students to orally construct their story and self-record to use as a reference in their writing.
- Edit spelling, grammar, and punctuation last.
- Provide frequent breaks.
- Use sentence starters or sentence frames when possible.
- Demonstrate and model writer's notebook with a teacher and/or student's notebook.
- Model setting goals. Provide a teacher-made survey to allow students to self-assess strengths and weaknesses as a basis for their goal setting.
- Provide direct and explicit instruction on making changes to your story by adding characters, settings, time movement, etc. Provide examples as reference sheets.
- Build an anchor chart for "Planting Seed" or "Making Movies in Your Mind" to grow ideas and refer to throughout the unit.
- Use shared writing to highlight grammar.
- Provide guided notes on the differences in revision and editing.

Students with 504 Plans

- Use various methods to understand a student's learning style: observation, surveys, and conferring
- Refer to student 504 plan for goals and modifications.
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge.
- Use pre-assessment data to drive instruction.
- Use preferential seating.
- Use flexible grouping.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer's current level.
- Model productive and engaging partner talk.

- Allow for extended time.
- Provide guided notes as necessary.
- Set a writing goal for an assignment and then focus only on that goal.
- Allow students to type.
- Allow students to orally construct their story and self-record to use as a reference in their writing.
- Edit spelling, grammar, and punctuation last.
- Provide frequent breaks.
- Use sentence starters or sentence frames when possible.
- Demonstrate and model writer’s notebook with a teacher and/or student’s notebook.
- Model setting goals. Provide a teacher-made survey to allow students to self-assess strengths and weaknesses as a basis for their goal setting.
- Provide direct and explicit instruction on making changes to your story by adding characters, settings, time movement, etc. Provide examples as reference sheets.
- Build an anchor chart for “Planting Seed” or “Making Movies in Your Mind” to grow ideas and refer to throughout the unit.
- Use shared writing to highlight grammar.
- Provide guided notes on the differences in revision and editing.

Students at Risk

- Use various methods to understand a student’s learning style: observation, surveys, and conferring
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge.
- Use pre-assessment data to drive instruction.
- Use preferential seating.
- Use flexible grouping.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer’s current level.
- Model productive and engaging partner talk.
- Allow for extended time.
- Provide guided notes as necessary.
- Set a writing goal for an assignment and then focus only on that goal.
- Allow students to type.
- Allow students to orally construct their story and self-record to use as a reference in their writing.
- Edit spelling, grammar, and punctuation last.
- Provide frequent breaks.
- Use sentence starters or frames when possible.
- Demonstrate and model writer’s notebook with a teacher and/or student’s notebook.
- Model setting goals. Provide a teacher-made survey sheet to allow students to self-assess strengths and weaknesses as a basis for their goal setting.
- Provide direct and explicit instruction on making changes to your story by adding characters, settings, time movement, etc. Provide examples as reference sheets.
- Build an anchor chart “Planting Seed” or “Making Movies in Your Mind” to grow ideas and refer to throughout the unit.
- Use shared writing to highlight grammar.
- Provide guided notes on the differences in revision and editing.

English Language Learners

- Use various methods to understand a student’s learning style: observation, surveys, and conferring
- Allow use of a bilingual dictionary.
- Allow use of handheld translators.
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge.
- Use pre-assessment data to drive instruction.

- Use preferential seating.
- Use flexible grouping.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer's current level.
- Model productive and engaging partner talk.
- Allow for extended time.
- Provide guided notes as necessary.
- Set a writing goal for an assignment and then focus only on that goal.
- Allow students to type.
- Allow students to orally construct their story and self-record to use as a reference in their writing.
- Edit spelling, grammar, and punctuation last.
- Provide frequent breaks.
- Use sentence starters or frames when possible.
- Demonstrate and model writer's notebook with a teacher and/or student's notebook.
- Model setting goals, provide a teacher made survey sheet to allow students to self-assess strengths and weaknesses as a basis for their goal setting.
- Provide direct and explicit instruction on making changes to your story by adding characters, settings, time movement, etc. Provide examples as reference sheets.
- Build an anchor chart "Planting Seed" or "Making Movies in Your Mind" to grow ideas and refer to throughout the unit.
- Use shared writing to highlight grammar.
- Provide guided notes on the differences in revision and editing.

Gifted and Talented

- Use various methods to understand a student's learning style: observation, surveys, and conferring
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge.
- Use pre-assessment data to drive instruction.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer's current level.
- Provide opportunities to lead discussion.
- Use flexible grouping.
- Set a writing goal for an assignment.
- Provide opportunities to use student notebooks as an example.
- Demonstrate and model writer's notebook with a teacher and/or student's notebook.

Social Emotional Learning Competencies

- **Self-Awareness:** ability to recognize one's emotions and know one's strengths and limitations
 - Connections:
 - Students will be working with partners or in small groups. It is important for students to understand that everyone has different strengths and areas of growth. The teacher helps support students with this.
 - Use of student/teacher specific praise regularly on student areas of strength and areas that have been improving.
 - Check-in on feelings (thumbs up, down, in the middle). This helps the teacher know who might need additional support.
- **Self-Management:** ability to regulate and control one's emotions and behaviors, particularly in stressful situations
 - Connections:
 - Applying Open Circle strategies such as belly breathing when feeling upset or

anxious.

- Cool down spot in the classroom to take a break. Students are encouraged to use it to help refocus as needed.
- Use of fidget toys as needed.
- **Social Awareness:** ability to take the perspective of others, demonstrate empathy, acknowledge and appreciate similarities and differences, and understand how one's actions influence and are influenced by others
 - Connections:
 - Students becoming the "expert" helper to support others in their work.
 - Practicing active listening strategies when classmates are speaking.
 - Use of "I messages" when resolving conflicts.
- **Relationship Skills:** refers to one's ability to demonstrate prosocial skills and behaviors in order to develop meaningful relationships and resolve interpersonal conflicts
 - Connections:
 - Sharing materials, taking turns, understanding that everyone may not always get a turn for every activity.
 - Use of "I messages" when resolving conflicts.
 - Use of active listening strategies, i.e. repeating what you heard your partner say when discussion conflicts.
- **Responsible Decision-Making:** refers to the ability to use multiple pieces of information to make ethical and responsible decisions
 - Connections:
 - Class rules
 - Class discussions
 - Following rules

Possible Mentor Texts

Fish in a Tree by Lynda Mullaly Hunt

Chrysanthemum by Kevin Henkes

Thank You, Mr. Falker by Patricia Polacco

Crash by Jerry Spinelli

A Scout's Honor by Avi

Fireflies! by Julie Brinckloe

Jin Woo by Eve Bunting

Chicken Sunday by Patricia Polacco

My Rotten Redheaded Older Brother by Patricia Polacco

Professional Resources

If... Then... Curriculum Assessment-Based Instruction Grades 6-8 by Lucy Calkins

The Writing Strategies Book: Your Everything Guide to Developing Skilled Writers by Jennifer Serravallo

Unit 2 Opinion: Literary Essay & Compare and Contrast Themes in Literature

Unit Overview

In the *Literary Essay & Compare and Contrast Themes in Literature* writing unit, students will read texts more closely and with a greater focus on character detail. As students read texts during reading workshop in the *Character Analysis and Short Stories* unit, they will dig deeper into the desires, fears, and struggles of the characters, and use this information to identify themes. Students will develop ideas and claims about characters by gathering information from short stories and their independent reading. Students will compare two texts through the lens of a common theme by considering the similarities and differences in the ways the two texts deal with an issue or problem. They will gather evidence to create effective thesis statements. Students will draft using reasoning, paraphrasing, and direct quotations from the text. Essayists will write strong introductions, conclusions, and body paragraphs that focus on the beginning, middle, and end of the stories. Students will apply what they have learned in the past, and use this knowledge to revise their work. They will use varied sentence structures to produce more sophisticated writing. Students will publish and celebrate their work with peers and continue to set goals for themselves as writers.

Enduring Understandings

Writers will:

- Create and establish goals.
- Read multiple texts closely with a focus on the theme.
- Distinguish the difference between narrative and essay structure.
- Utilize collected information to develop effective thesis statements that contain one theme and two stories.
- Use a boxes and bullets structure to organize ideas.
- Use a “point by point” method when structuring their essay.
- Use facts, paraphrasing, and quotes from both stories accurately within the writing piece.
- Use transitions to connect their ideas within an essay structure.
- Craft strong introductions, body paragraphs, and conclusions.
- Cite evidence properly.
- Apply technology to enhance meaning.
- Use compound sentences to vary their sentence structure.
- Publish and celebrate their writing with peers.

Assessment

Pre-assessment	Post-assessment
<p>For this assessment, the teacher should choose two short stories that students have access to and have a similar theme. Here are some possible suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Boar Out There and Oliver Button is a Sissy• <i>A Day's Work</i> and <i>The Principal's New Clothes</i>• <i>Marble Champ</i> and <i>Fly Away Home</i>• <i>A Scout's Honor</i> and <i>My Rotten Redheaded Older Brother</i>• <i>Crash</i> and <i>Fish in a Tree</i>	<p>For this assessment, the teacher should choose two short stories that students have access to and have a similar theme. Here are some possible suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Boar Out There and Oliver Button is a Sissy• <i>A Day's Work</i> and <i>The Principal's New Clothes</i>• <i>Marble Champ</i> and <i>Fly Away Home</i>• <i>A Scout's Honor</i> and <i>My Rotten Redheaded Older Brother</i>• <i>Crash</i> and <i>Fish in a Tree</i>

“We have learned about the conflicts that (Character 1) and (Character 2) have faced. Identify a similar theme in both texts by thinking about the characters, their struggles and reactions, and what is happening in both stories. Develop your claim and write an essay that is supported with evidence from the text.

In your writing, make sure you:

- Write an introduction.
- State your opinion or claim.
- Give reasons and evidence.
- Organize your writing.
- Use transition words.
- Write a conclusion.”

Score using the [OPS Rubric for Argument Writing Grade 6](#)

“We have learned about the conflicts that (Character 1) and (Character 2) have faced. Identify a similar theme in both texts by thinking about the characters, their struggles and reactions, and what is happening in both stories. Develop your claim and write an essay that is supported with evidence from the text.

In your writing, make sure you:

- Write an introduction.
- State your opinion or claim.
- Give reasons and evidence.
- Organize your writing.
- Use transition words.
- Write a conclusion.”

Score using the [OPS Rubric for Argument Writing Grade 6](#)

Possible Ongoing Assessments

- Triple t-chart comparing and contrasting essays and narratives
- Create theories about characters
- Pull evidence from the text
- Label the type of evidence (action, thought, dialogue)
- Use a boxes and bullets graphic organizer
- Color code the evidence to support each reason
- Notebook check for claims/theories/thesis statements
- Annotated fictional stories
- Writer’s notebook
- Annotated literary essay samples
- Discussions
- Partner talk
- Published writing pieces
- Rubric
- Checklists
- Published pieces assessed with the [OPS Rubric for Argument Writing Grade 6](#) (modified to reflect the literary essay genre)

Standards (NJSLs) Addressed in this Unit

Reading

RL.CI.6.2. Determine the theme of a literary text (e.g., stories, plays or poetry) and explain how it is supported by key details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
 RI.CI.6.2. Determine the central idea of an informational text, and explain how it is supported by key details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

Writing

W.AW.6.1. Write arguments on discipline-specific content (e.g., social studies, science, math, technical subjects, English/Language Arts) to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

- A. Introduce claim(s) about a topic or issue and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- B. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant, accurate data and evidence, that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources.
- C. Use words, phrases, and clauses to link and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons and evidence.
- D. Establish and maintain a formal/academic style, approach, and form.
- E. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.

W.IW.6.2. Write informative/explanatory texts (including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes) to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

- A. Introduce a topic and organize ideas, concepts, and information, using text structures (e.g., definition, classification, comparison/contrast, cause/effect, etc.) and text features (e.g., headings, graphics, and multimedia) when useful to aid in comprehension.
- B. Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
- C. Use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
- D. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
- E. Acknowledge and attempt a formal/academic style, approach, and form.
- F. Provide a concluding statement or section (e.g., sentence, part of a paragraph, paragraph, or multiple paragraphs) that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

W.WP.6.4. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning; flexibly making editing and revision choices; sustaining effort to fit composition needs and purposes; and attempting to address purpose and audience.

W.SE.6.6. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess the credibility of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources. 🌱

Speaking & Listening

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

- A. Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
- B. Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
- C. Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion.

D. Review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing.

SL.ES.6.3. Deconstruct a speaker's argument and specific claims, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.

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

SL.AS.6.6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Language

L.SS.6.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

- A. Ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, possessive).
- B. Use intensive pronouns (e.g. myself, ourselves).
- C. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.
- D. Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).
- E. Recognize variations from standard English in their own and others' writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.

L.KL.6.2. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

- A. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases.
- B. Gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.
- C. Vary sentence patterns for meaning (syntax), reader/listener interest, and style/voice.
- D. Maintain consistency in style and tone.

L.VI.6.3. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

- A. Use context (e.g. the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
- B. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g. audience, auditory, audible).
- C. Consult reference materials (e.g. dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.
- D. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g. by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

L.VI.6.4. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

- A. Interpret figures of speech (e.g. personification) in context.
- B. Use the relationship between particular words (e.g. cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words.
- C. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g. stingy, scrimping, economical, unwhasteful, thrifty).

Computer Science and Design Thinking

8.2.8.ED.5: Explain the need for optimization in a design process.

Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills

9.4.8.GCA.1: Model how to navigate cultural differences with sensitivity and respect (e.g., 1.5.8.C1a).
9.4.8.GCA.2: Demonstrate openness to diverse ideas and perspectives through active discussions to achieve a group goal.

Practices

CLKSP1 Act as a responsible and contributing community member and employee.

CLKSP4 Demonstrate creativity and innovation.

CLKSP8 Use technology to enhance productivity, increase collaboration and communicate effectively.

CLKSP9 Work productively in teams while using cultural/global competence.

Interdisciplinary Connections

Social Studies

6.3.8.CivicsPD.3: Construct a claim as to why it is important for democracy that individuals are informed by facts, aware of diverse viewpoints, and willing to take action on public issues.

Unit 2 Opinion: Literary Essay & Compare and Contrast Themes in Literature Suggested Teaching Points

Unit 2 Bend/1: Structure and Content of Compare and Contrast Literary Essays

Writers will understand the content and structure of literary essays that develop a similar theme across two stories by...

- Analyzing examples of literary essays.
- Comparing the similarities and differences between narrative writing and essay writing.
- Realizing that essays have a distinct structure.
- Reflecting on being an essayist:
 - Creating an anchor chart of their experiences with essay writing
 - Having students reflect in their notebooks about times they have written essays and the topics they wrote about
- Noticing the use of text evidence to support the claim.
- Identifying/noticing the “point by point” method.
- Writing a literary essay with the teacher using shared texts.
(e.g. *Fish in a Tree* & *Chrysanthemum* or *Fish in a Tree* & *Crash*)
 - [Malala’s Magic Pencil](#) & [Henry’s Freedom Box](#)
 - *The Other Side* & *Chrysanthemum*

Unit 2/Bend 2: Building and Organizing Theories to Respond to Them in Writing

Writers will build theories across texts by...

- Activating reading skills to prepare for writing.
- Analyzing similar themes across multiple texts.
- Exploring the different treatment of a similar theme.
- Using writing to think clearly and deeply about reading.
- Using their knowledge of the characters to create multiple claims that fit with each story.
- Comparing and contrasting different literary devices that each author used to develop the plot:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Setting ○ Point of view ○ Climax ○ Perspectives ○ Genre ○ Conflict ○ Figurative language ● Experimenting with multiple claims by creating boxes and bullets to support each one. ● Zooming in on the topic and texts they hope to write about. ● Picking a rough idea and then trying that idea out in several different ways until they find a thesis they can support. ● Altering their theories based on the evidence they identified. ● Using claim starters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Both ____ and ____ have a lot of differences, but they also have some similarities. ○ ____ and ____ are both ____. ○ ____ and ____ are alike and different. ○ ____ and ____ are different because ____, but when you look at them, you can actually see that they are also both ____. ○ Both ____ and ____ deal with ____, but in different ways. ○ Both ____ and ____ learn ____, but they learn it differently. ● Testing their theories by finding examples that serve as evidence. ● Experimenting with creating the big reasons that support each claim. ● Using a variety of evidence to support their ideas. ● Evaluating their examples to identify which ones best support their claim. ● Drafting topic sentences that clearly state the big reason they will be writing about in each body paragraph. ● Finding and selecting powerful quotes. ● Selecting and organizing their evidence to create a plan for drafting. ● Color coding their evidence to match each reason.
<p><i>Writers will use their claims and evidence to draft literary essays by...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Logically organizing the reasons that explain the claim or thesis and build their opinion. ● Using a combination of direct quoting and paraphrasing. ● Quoting with attention to accuracy. ● Using the “point by point” method to compare themes across stories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Body paragraphs (2-4): topic sentence about story 1 and 2, introduce evidence for story 1, explain evidence for story 1, transition, introduce evidence for story 2, explain evidence for story 2, connect back to the topic sentence ● Connecting various types of evidence in the body paragraphs with transitional words and phrases. (e.g. first, next, then, lastly, most importantly, in fact, according to) ● Writing an introductory paragraph that states the claim or thesis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hook ○ Explanation of story (in terms of thesis) ○ Thesis statement ● Creating a conclusion that relates to the real world.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Crafting a new understanding. ● Building stronger paragraphs by adding more detail and elaborating. ● Using precise compare and contrast words to connect and transition from one idea to the next. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Comparing words: similarly, alike, same, both ○ Contrasting words: unlike, however, on the other hand ● Drafting using all they know. ● Deepening initial observations. ● Conferring with students as they work on the content and structure. ● Rewrite to fill holes and to get rid of irrelevant passages.
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Unit 2/Bend 3: Revise, Edit and Publish

<p><i>Writers will revise and edit their literary essays by...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Using peer editors to identify strengths, set goals and revise their evidence and explanations, as needed. ● Using the writing rubric to self-assess for paragraphs and organization. ● Styling their final draft using appropriate formatting. (e.g. font, alignment and spacing) ● Reflecting on their writing decisions and how it impacts their writing. ● Applying what they have learned in the past to today’s revision. ● Using varied sentence structure to produce more sophisticated writing. (e.g. simple, compound, and complex sentences) ● Offering constructive feedback to their peers. ● Problem solving, as needed. ● Taking the “bumps in the road” in stride by maintaining a growth mindset.
<p><i>Writers reflect on their achievements by...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sharing moments that they are proud of throughout the writing process. ● Celebrating their accomplishments during the writing unit. ● Choosing one essay to publish and celebrate. ● Publishing and celebrating as a community of writers. ● Offering their peers positive compliments and feedback.

Unit 2: Grammar/Mechanics

<p>Compound Sentences (nor, for, yet) Example: He did not study last night, nor did he read his book.</p> <p>Writers will understand compound sentences by...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Analyzing and discussing examples and nonexamples. ● Identifying the conjunctions in each sentence. ● Applying these strategies to their own writing pieces.
<p>Dependent Clauses Example: Until the sun sets, we can’t search for fireflies.</p> <p>Writers will understand dependent clauses by...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Analyzing and discussing examples and nonexamples.

- Identifying the dependent clauses in each sentence.
- Applying these strategies to their own writing pieces.

Suggested Modifications

These strategies can be adapted to scaffold for students needing more support or extend the learning for higher-level students. Differentiation is accomplished through content, process, product and learning environment.

Special Education Students

- Use various methods to understand a student’s learning style: observation, surveys, and conferring
- Refer to student IEP for goals and modifications.
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge.
- Use pre-assessment data to drive instruction.
- Use preferential seating.
- Use flexible grouping.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer’s current level.
- Model productive and engaging partner talk.
- Provide guided notes as necessary.
- Set a writing goal for an assignment and then focus only on that goal.
- Allow students to orally construct their story and self-record to use as a reference in their writing.
- Edit spelling, grammar, and punctuation last.
- Provide frequent breaks.
- Use sentence starters or frames when possible.
- Allow choice in writing instruments. (e.g. pencil/pen/keyboard)
- Define and share examples of literary essays and thesis statements.
- Provide graphic organizer on elements of the literary essay.
- Provide examples of introductory and concluding paragraphs, highlighting why they are effective.
- Build anchor charts on color coding text evidence and refer to throughout the unit.
- Role play and model accountable talk and debate.
- Define attainable goals and aid students in making goals.
- Use leveled and audiobooks when possible.

Students with 504 Plans

- Use various methods to understand a student’s learning style: observation, surveys, and conferring
- Refer to student 504 plan for goals and modifications.
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge.
- Use pre-assessment data to drive instruction.
- Use preferential seating.
- Use flexible grouping.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer’s current level.
- Model productive and engaging partner talk.
- Provide guided notes as necessary.
- Set a writing goal for an assignment and then focus only on that goal.
- Allow students to orally construct their story and self-record to use as a reference in their writing.
- Edit spelling, grammar, and punctuation last.
- Provide frequent breaks.
- Use sentence starters or frames when possible.
- Allow choice in writing instruments. (e.g. pencil/pen/keyboard)
- Define and share examples of literary essays and thesis statements.

- Provide graphic organizer on elements of the literary essay.
- Provide examples of introductory and concluding paragraphs, highlighting why they are effective.
- Build anchor charts on color coding text evidence and refer to throughout the unit.
- Role play and model accountable talk and debate.
- Define attainable goals and aid students in making goals.
- Use leveled and audiobooks when possible.

Students at Risk

- Use various methods to understand a student's learning style: observation, surveys, and conferring
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge.
- Use pre-assessment data to drive instruction.
- Use preferential seating.
- Use flexible grouping.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer's current level.
- Model productive and engaging partner talk.
- Provide guided notes as necessary.
- Set a writing goal for an assignment and then focus only on that goal.
- Allow students to orally construct their story and self-record to use as a reference in their writing.
- Edit spelling, grammar, and punctuation last.
- Use sentence starters or frames when possible.
- Allow choice in writing instruments. (e.g. pencil/pen/keyboard)
- Define and share examples of literary essays and thesis statements.
- Provide graphic organizer on elements of literary essay.
- Provide direct instruction on finding and citing evidence with examples.
- Provide examples of introductory and concluding paragraphs, highlighting why they are effective.
- Build anchor charts on color coding text evidence and refer to throughout the unit.
- Role play and model accountable talk.
- Define attainable goals and aid students in making goals.
- Use leveled and audiobooks when possible.

English Language Learners

- Use various methods to understand a student's learning style: observation, surveys, and conferring
- Allow use of a bilingual dictionary.
- Allow use of handheld translators.
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge.
- Use pre-assessment data to drive instruction.
- Use preferential seating.
- Use flexible grouping.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer's current ability.
- Allow students to orally construct their story and self-record to use as a reference in their writing.
- Edit spelling, grammar, and punctuation last.
- Use sentence starters or frames when possible.
- Allow choice in writing instruments. (e.g. pencil/pen/keyboard)
- Define and share examples of literary essays and thesis statements.
- Provide graphic organizer on elements of literary essay.
- Provide examples of introductory and concluding paragraphs, highlighting why they are effective.
- Build an anchor chart on color coding text evidence and refer to it throughout the unit.
- Role play and model accountable discussion and debate.
- Define attainable goals and aid students in making goals.
- Use leveled and audiobooks when possible.

Gifted and Talented

- Use various methods to understand a student's learning style: observation, surveys, and conferring
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge.
- Use pre-assessment data to drive instruction.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer's current ability.
- Provide opportunities for students to compare and contrast texts across genres.
- Provide opportunities to lead discussion.
- Use flexible grouping.
- Provide opportunities to use student notebooks as an example.

Social Emotional Learning Competencies

- **Self-Awareness:** ability to recognize one's emotions and know one's strengths and limitations
 - Connections:
 - Students will be working with partners or in small groups. It is important for students to understand that everyone has different strengths and areas of growth. The teacher helps support students with this.
 - Use of student/teacher specific praise regularly on student areas of strength and areas that have been improving.
 - Check-in on feelings (thumbs up, down, in the middle). This helps the teacher know who might need additional support.
- **Self-Management:** ability to regulate and control one's emotions and behaviors, particularly in stressful situations
 - Connections:
 - Applying Open Circle strategies such as belly breathing when feeling upset or anxious.
 - Cool down spot in the classroom to take a break. Students are encouraged to use it to help refocus as needed.
 - Use of fidget toys as needed.
- **Social Awareness:** ability to take the perspective of others, demonstrate empathy, acknowledge and appreciate similarities and differences, and understand how one's actions influence and are influenced by others
 - Connections:
 - Students becoming the "expert" helper to support others in their work.
 - Practicing active listening strategies when classmates are speaking.
 - Use of "I messages" when resolving conflicts.
- **Relationship Skills:** refers to one's ability to demonstrate prosocial skills and behaviors in order to develop meaningful relationships and resolve interpersonal conflicts
 - Connections:
 - Sharing materials, taking turns, understanding that everyone may not always get a turn for every activity.
 - Use of "I messages" when resolving conflicts.
 - Use of active listening strategies, i.e. repeating what you heard your partner say when discussion conflicts.
- **Responsible Decision-Making:** refers to the ability to use multiple pieces of information to make

ethical and responsible decisions

- Connections:
 - Class rules
 - Class discussions
 - Following rules

Suggested Mentor Texts

Sample literary essay created by the class (*Fish in a Tree* and *Crash*)

Examples of literary essays from past students

A Scout's Honor by Avi

Baseball in April by Gary Soto

Eleven by Sandra Cisneros

Thank You, Ma'am by Langston Hughes

Tripping Over the Lunch Lady and Other School Stories by various authors (edited by Nancy E. Mercado)

Tuesday of the Other June by Norma Fox Mazer

The Other Side by Jacqueline Woodson

Chrysanthemum by Kevin Henkes

Raymond's Run by Toni Cade Bambara

Fish in a Tree by Lynda Mullaly Hunt

Crash by Jerry Spinelli

Professional Resources

Units of Study in Argument, Information, and Narrative Writing: If... Then... Curriculum, Assessment Based Instruction, Grades 6-8, by Lucy Calkins with Colleagues from TCRWP

Units of Study in Argument, Information, and Narrative Writing, The Literary Essay, Grade 6, Unit 2 by Lucy Calkins, Kate Roberts, and Kathleen Tolan

The Writing Strategies Book: Your Everything Guide to Developing Skilled Writers by Jennifer Serravallo

Unit 3 Informational: Bringing History to Life

Unit Overview

Writers in the *Bringing History to Life* unit will immerse themselves in information on specific people and topics by reading and keeping track of ideas. In reading workshop, they will be researching and analyzing a variety of sources to develop a big-picture view of specific topics during their *Tapping into the Power of Nonfiction* unit. The class texts will include topics such as: **The African American Experience**, Important Women, **The Holocaust**, the **Asian American Experience**, and The Industrial Revolution. Students will use their research to fuel their writing for this unit. Students will also be reading *The Upstairs Room* to get them excited about historical topics. They will draw from everything they know about the structure of essay writing. Students will continue to follow their trail of research and organize their ideas. Throughout this unit, writers will strengthen their credibility by incorporating solid evidence into their writing including accurate quotes, supportable facts, and clear statistics. Writers will separate their information into specific categories, and organize the information into an informational book. Throughout the unit, students will provide feedback to their peers in the form of compliments and suggestions. Students will select a biography to read and use their informational writing skills to create a digital presentation. At the end of the unit, students will celebrate their achievements by unveiling this work using an online platform. Students will share their presentations during Black History Month in February.

Enduring Understandings

Writers will...

- Choose historical topics that are interesting and engaging.
- Become experts on their topics by looking at many different perspectives and through many lenses.
- Write about these topics in thoughtful ways.
- Use note-taking skills to keep track of these topics.
- Organize their information into an informational book.
- Use a table of contents to divide their information into distinct sections.
- Use a variety of evidence to show and support their findings.
- Use transitions within their informational book to connect ideas.
- Write introductions for their informational books.
- Use a variety of text features to explain their ideas.
- Cite sources properly.
- Understand what plagiarism is and how to avoid it.
- Use appositives to vary sentence structure.
- Correct run-ons and fragments making sure sentence structure is correct and varied.
- Create digital projects to show what they have learned.
- Publish and celebrate their writing.

Assessments

Pre-assessment	Post-assessment
<p>Prompt: “Think of a topic (e.g. American Revolution or The Holocaust) that you’ve studied or that you know a lot about. You will have 45 minutes to write an informational (or all-about) text that teaches others interesting and important information and ideas</p>	<p>Prompt: “Think of a topic (e.g. American Revolution or The Holocaust) that you’ve studied or that you know a lot about. You will have 45 minutes to write an informational (or all-about) text that teaches others interesting and important information and ideas</p>

about that topic. Please keep in mind that you'll have only this one class period to complete this, so you'll need to plan, draft, revise, and edit in one sitting. Write in a way that shows all that you know about informational writing."

"In your writing, make sure you:

- Write an introduction.
- Elaborate with a variety of information.
- Organize your writing.
- Write a conclusion."

Score using the [OPS Rubric for Informational Writing Grade 6](#)

about that topic. Please keep in mind that you'll have only this one class period to complete this, so you'll need to plan, draft, revise, and edit in one sitting. Write in a way that shows all that you know about informational writing."

"In your writing, make sure you:

- Write an introduction.
- Elaborate with a variety of information.
- Organize your writing.
- Write a conclusion."

Score using the [OPS Rubric for Informational Writing Grade 6](#)

Possible Ongoing Assessments

- Teacher observations
- Student participation
- Individual writing conferences
- Small group instruction
- Writing partners
- Writer's notebook entries
- Google Classroom
- Partner talk and feedback
- Class sharing
- Exit tickets
- Create their own anchor chart
- Reflection on where students were as writers and how they have grown
- Annotated *Newse/a* articles
- Published pieces assessed with the [OPS Rubric for Informational Writing Grade 6](#)

Standards (NJSLs) Addressed in this Unit

Reading

RL.CR.6.1. Cite textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what a literary text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.


RI.CR.6.1. Cite textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what an informational text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL.CI.6.2. Determine the theme of a literary text (e.g., stories, plays or poetry) and explain how it is supported by key details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

RI.CI.6.2. Determine the central idea of an informational text and explain how it is supported by key details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

RI.IT.6.3. Analyze how a particular text's (e.g., article, brochure, technical manual, procedural text) structure unfolds by using textual evidence to describe how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text

RI.MF.6.6. Integrate information when presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.

RI.AA.6.7. Trace the development of and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not. 


RL.CT.6.8. Compare and contrast literary texts in different forms, by different authors, or from different genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and primary source documents, scientific journals and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.

Writing

W.IW.6.2. Write informative/explanatory texts (including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes) to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

- A. Introduce a topic and organize ideas, concepts, and information, using text structures (e.g., definition, classification, comparison/contrast, cause/effect, etc.) and text features (e.g., headings, graphics, and multimedia) when useful to aid in comprehension.
- B. Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
- C. Use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
- D. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
- E. Acknowledge and attempt a formal/academic style, approach, and form.
- F. Provide a concluding statement or section (e.g., sentence, part of a paragraph, paragraph, or multiple paragraphs) that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

W.WP.6.4. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning; flexibly making editing and revision choices; sustaining effort to fit composition needs and purposes; and attempting to address purpose and audience.

W.SE.6.6. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess the credibility of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources. 

W.RW.6.7. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Speaking & Listening

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

- A. Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
- B. Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
- C. Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion.
- D. Review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing.

SL.ES.6.3. Deconstruct a speaker’s argument and specific claims, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.

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

SL.AS.6.6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Language

L.SS.6.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

- A. Ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, possessive).
- B. Use intensive pronouns (e.g. myself, ourselves).
- C. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.
- D. Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).
- E. Recognize variations from standard English in their own and others' writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.

L.KL.6.2. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

- A. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases.
- B. Gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.
- C. Vary sentence patterns for meaning (syntax), reader/listener interest, and style/voice.
- D. Maintain consistency in style and tone.

L.VI.6.3. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

- A. Use context (e.g. the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
- B. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g. audience, auditory, audible).
- C. Consult reference materials (e.g. dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.
- D. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g. by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

L.VI.6.4. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

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

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

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

Computer Science and Design Thinking

8.2.8.ED.5: Explain the need for optimization in a design process.

Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills

9.4.8.GCA.1: Model how to navigate cultural differences with sensitivity and respect (e.g., 1.5.8.C1a).

9.4.8.GCA.2: Demonstrate openness to diverse ideas and perspectives through active discussions to achieve a group goal.

Practices

CLKSP1 Act as a responsible and contributing community member and employee.

CLKSP4 Demonstrate creativity and innovation.

CLKSP8 Use technology to enhance productivity, increase collaboration and communicate effectively.

CLKSP9 Work productively in teams while using cultural/global competence.

Interdisciplinary Connections

Social Studies

6.1.8.CivicsDP.3.a: Use primary and secondary sources to assess whether or not the ideals found in the Declaration of Independence were fulfilled for women, African Americans, and Native Americans during this time period.

Unit 3 Informational: Bringing History to Life Suggested Teaching Points

Unit 3/Bend 1: Immersion into Topics and Ideas

Writers will select and immerse themselves in specific topics and people by...

- Choosing a specific topic that has had a lasting impact on the world. (e.g. Influential Women, African American History, The Holocaust, Asian Americans, The Industrial Revolution):
 - Look at lists of famous and influential people and events.
 - Research using *Newse/ra* and other online databases.
 - Find books in the library on a specific topic.
- Becoming engaged in a topic.
- Reading for a wide view of a topic.
- Pausing to organize notes.
- Writing while reading to collect information.
- Preparing to write informational essays.
- Finding supporting and key details.
- Illustrating patterns that apply to many cases.
- Following a topic closely.
- Reading and looking for a specific angle.

Unit 3/Bend 2: Drafting and Revising Information Books on Focused Topics

Writers will plan and structure their informational books by...

- Looking at examples of informational books and noticing the varying structures.
- Using their knowledge of text features.
- Pursuing information and focusing in on topics.
- Transferring earlier lessons to this new research.
- Envisioning structures to plan an informational book:
 - Think about the different chapters that need to be included.
 - Consider problem vs. solution. (e.g. Note chapters on the problem vs. chapters on the solution.)
 - Note the chronological order.
 - Organize using boxes and bullets.
- Considering what their table of contents will look like.
- Charting a research trail to understand and organize information.

Writers will draft and elaborate on their ideas by...

- Using transition words.
- Sharing compliments and suggestions with partners.
- Writing with detail.
- Lifting the level of sentence complexity.
- Using text features to strengthen writing.
- Quoting with a purpose in mind.
- Citing examples from the text with direct quotes and paraphrasing.
- Giving several pieces of evidence to support a point.
- Including evidence and reflecting about the ways evidence supports their point.
- Including a combination and variety of information:
 - Stories
 - Explanations
 - Descriptions
 - Quotations
 - Vocabulary words
 - Definitions
 - Maps and photographs
 - Observations
 - Statistics
 - Diagrams with labels
 - Glossary
- Writing an introduction to the whole book.
- Using punctuation to help include extra information and explanations. (e.g. dashes, parentheses, colons, and semicolons)

Writers will revise and edit their work by...

- Editing with partners using a checklist.
- Teaching partners about their new chapters.
- Revising chapters for structure.
- Revising by rereading through particular lenses.

Unit 3/Bend 3: Digital Writing Projects

Writers share expertise online by...

- Studying digital mentor texts.
- Coaching writers to glean more from mentor texts.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Planning for digital slide show presentations. ● Revising to fit digital formats. ● Tackling planning challenges. ● Creating plans that have a logical flow. ● Putting extra information into presentation notes. ● Pouring into digital formats and publishing.
Writers will celebrate their achievements by...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Choosing a person within their topic. ● Thinking about what life was like for this person during the time period. ● Using the first-person to present their feelings, attitudes, and findings during this unit.

Unit 4: Grammar/Mechanics

Run-ons and Sentence Fragments

Writers will understand run-ons and sentence fragments by...

- Analyzing and discussing examples and nonexamples.
- Identifying run-ons and fragments in their drafts and make corrections as they go.
- Applying these strategies to their own writing pieces.

Appositive Sentence

Example: My childhood home, a yellow and blue house, is just down the road.

Writers will understand appositives by...

- Analyzing and discussing examples and nonexamples.
- Identifying why and how an appositive phrase sentence can be created within their writing.
- Applying these strategies to their own writing pieces.

Suggested Modifications

These strategies can be adapted to scaffold for students needing more support or extend the learning for higher-level students. Differentiation is accomplished through content, process, product and learning environment.

Special Education Students

- Use various methods to understand a student's learning style: observation, surveys, and conferring
- Refer to student IEP for goals and modifications.
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge.
- Use pre-assessment data to drive instruction.
- Use preferential seating.
- Use flexible grouping.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer's current level.
- Model productive and engaging partner talk.
- Set a writing goal for an assignment and then focus only on that goal.
- Allow students to orally construct their story and self-record to use as a reference in their writing.
- Edit spelling, grammar, and punctuation last.
- Provide frequent breaks.
- Use sentence starters or frames when possible.
- Provide envelopes or folders for gathering information.

- Provide direct and explicit instruction on highlighting, color coding, paraphrasing, note-taking and citing information.
- Provide a list of transition words for informational writing.
- Provide direct instruction with examples of how to use “Hooks for Research Writing.”
- Provide examples of research projects with strong hooks and conclusions.
- Provide examples of timelines in chronological order.
- Build an anchor chart on text features and refer to it throughout the unit.
- Provide notes on how to use the digital tools and programs that are available.
- Provide leveled texts and articles when possible.

Students with 504 Plans

- Use various methods to understand a student’s learning style: observation, surveys, and conferring
- Refer to student 504 plan for goals and modifications.
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge.
- Use pre-assessment data to drive instruction.
- Use preferential seating.
- Use flexible grouping.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer’s current level.
- Model productive and engaging partner talk.
- Set a writing goal for an assignment and then focus only on that goal.
- Allow students to orally construct their story and self-record to use as a reference in their writing.
- Edit spelling, grammar, and punctuation last.
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- Provide direct and explicit instruction on highlighting, color coding, paraphrasing, note-taking and citing information.
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- Provide direct instruction with examples of how to use “Hooks for Research Writing.”
- Provide examples of research projects with strong hooks and conclusions.
- Provide examples of timelines in chronological order.
- Build an anchor chart on text features and refer to it throughout the unit.
- Provide notes on how to use the digital tools and programs that are available.
- Provide leveled texts and articles when possible.

Students at Risk

- Use various methods to understand a student’s learning style: observation, surveys, and conferring
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge and allow them to build on that knowledge.
- Use pre-assessment data to drive instruction.
- Use preferential seating.
- Use flexible grouping.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer’s current ability.
- Model productive and engaging partner talk.
- Allow for extended time.
- Set a writing goal for an assignment and then focus only on that goal.
- Allow students to orally construct their story and self-record to use as a reference in their writing.
- Edit spelling, grammar, and punctuation last.
- Provide frequent breaks.
- Use sentence starters or frames when possible.

- Provide envelopes or folders for gathering information.
- Provide direct and explicit instruction on highlighting, color coding, paraphrasing, note-taking and citing information.
- Build an anchor chart on picking a topic with strategies to start the unit.
- Provide a list of transition words for informational writing.
- Provide chapter writing frames.
- Provide leveled research texts when possible.
- Provide examples of timelines in chronological order.
- Build an anchor chart on text features and refer to it throughout the unit.
- Provide notes on how to use the digital tools and programs that are available.

English Language Learners

- Use various methods to understand a student’s learning style: observation, surveys, conferring, TCRWP Assessments for Informational Writing.
- Allow use of a bilingual dictionary.
- Allow use of handheld translators.
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge.
- Use pre-assessment data to drive instruction.
- Use preferential seating.
- Use flexible grouping.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer’s current ability.
- Model productive and engaging partner talk.
- Set a writing goal for an assignment and then focus only on that goal.
- Allow students to orally construct their story and self-record to use as a reference in their writing.
- Edit spelling, grammar, and punctuation last.
- Use sentence starters or frames when possible.
- Provide envelopes or folders for organizing research.
- Provide direct and explicit instruction on highlighting, color coding, paraphrasing, note-taking and citing information.
- Build an anchor chart on picking a topic with strategies to start the unit.
- Provide a list of transition words for informational writing.
- Provide direct instruction with examples of how to use “Hooks for Research Writing.”
- Provide leveled text and articles when possible.
- Provide examples of timelines in chronological order.
- Provide leveled text and articles when possible.

Gifted and Talented

- Use various methods to understand a student’s learning style: observation, surveys, and conferring
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge and allow them to build on that knowledge.
- Use pre-assessment data to drive instruction.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer’s current ability.
- Provide opportunities to create 3D models to demonstrate learning.
- Provide opportunities to lead discussion.
- Use flexible grouping.
- Set a writing goal for an assignment .
- Provide opportunities to use a student's notebook as an example.
- Allow students to add subtopics and chapters and extend their writing.

Social Emotional Learning Competencies

- **Self-Awareness**: ability to recognize one’s emotions and know one’s strengths and limitations
 - Connections:
 - Students will be working with partners or in small groups. It is important for students to understand that everyone has different strengths and areas of growth. The teacher helps support students with this.
 - Use of student/teacher specific praise regularly on student areas of strength and areas that have been improving.
 - Check-in on feelings (thumbs up, down, in the middle). This helps the teacher know who might need additional support.
- **Self-Management**: ability to regulate and control one’s emotions and behaviors, particularly in stressful situations
 - Connections:
 - Applying Open Circle strategies such as belly breathing when feeling upset or anxious.
 - Cool down spot in the classroom to take a break. Students are encouraged to use it to help refocus as needed.
 - Use of fidget toys as needed.
- **Social Awareness**: ability to take the perspective of others, demonstrate empathy, acknowledge and appreciate similarities and differences, and understand how one’s actions influence and are influenced by others
 - Connections:
 - Students becoming the “expert” helper to support others in their work.
 - Practicing active listening strategies when classmates are speaking.
 - Use of “I messages” when resolving conflicts.
- **Relationship Skills**: refers to one’s ability to demonstrate prosocial skills and behaviors in order to develop meaningful relationships and resolve interpersonal conflicts
 - Connections:
 - Sharing materials, taking turns, understanding that everyone may not always get a turn for every activity.
 - Use of “I messages” when resolving conflicts.
 - Use of active listening strategies, i.e. repeating what you heard your partner say when discussion conflicts.
- **Responsible Decision-Making**: refers to the ability to use multiple pieces of information to make ethical and responsible decisions
 - Connections:
 - Class rules
 - Class discussions
 - Following rules

Mentor Texts

The Upstairs Room by Johanna Reiss

Newsela articles

Scholastic Leveled Book Room 4.0

Sample Informational Book created by the class

Examples of informational writing from past students

Professional Resources

Units of Study in Argument, Information, and Narrative Writing: If... Then... Curriculum, Assessment Based Instruction, Grades 6-8, by Lucy Calkins with Colleagues from TCRWP

Units of Study in Opinion, Information, and Narrative Writing: Bringing History To Life, Grade 4, Unit 3 Information by Lucy Calkins and Anna Gratz Cockerille

Units of Study in Argument, Information, and Narrative Writing: Research-Based Information Writing, Books Websites, and Presentations, Grade 6 Unit 3 Information by Lucy Calkins, Maggie Beattie Roberts, Emily Strang Campbell

The Writing Strategies Book: Your Everything Guide to Developing Skilled Writers by Jennifer Serravallo

[NJ Amistad Curriculum](#)

[NJ Holocaust Curriculum](#)

Unit 4 Opinion: Comparing and Contrasting Main Ideas and Perspectives in Informational Texts

Unit Overview

In the *Comparing and Contrasting Main Ideas and Perspectives in Informational Texts* writing unit, students will read nonfiction texts more closely with a greater focus on main idea and write based on a crafted claim. Students will use their knowledge from the *Tapping into the Power of Nonfiction* reading unit to dig deeper into text structures, text features, and information to identify what the text is mostly about. The class will write an essay with the teacher, perhaps using the *Wolong Panda* sources. Students will compare three texts through the lens of a common main idea by considering the similarities and differences in the ways the texts present the information. For this writing unit, students must have access to three texts that have similar main ideas; perhaps articles on [The Holocaust](#), [Japanese American Internment Camps](#), how [slavery violated human rights](#) and the American ideal, or The Trail of Tears. They will think specifically about perspective and lenses. They will gather evidence and support to create effective thesis statements that contain the main idea. Students will draft using their reasoning, paraphrasing, and direct quotations from the text. Students will identify both the “point by point” method and the “block” method and experiment using both. Essayists will strive to write strong introductions and conclusions. Their body paragraphs will focus on the development of the main idea. Students will apply what they have learned in the past about essay writing, and use this knowledge to revise their work. They will use varied sentence structures to produce more sophisticated writing. Students will publish and celebrate their work with peers and continue to set goals for themselves as writers.

Enduring Understandings

Writers will...

- Use the “point by point” and “block” method to craft an essay.
- Identify a common main idea across texts.
- Identify theories and claims.
- Contrast the ways in which the main idea is presented.
- Examine the perspective.
- Synthesize the information found to support their claim about the topic.
- Use their knowledge of the structure of essay to write opinion pieces.
- Use a combination of paraphrasing and direct quotations.
- Cite evidence properly.
- Use a varied sentence structure.
- Use objective, possessive, and subjective pronouns correctly.
- Celebrate and publish as a community of writers.

Assessment

Pre-assessment	Post-assessment
For this assessment, the teacher should choose two or three sources that have a similar main idea or claim, but a different perspective. Here are some possible suggestions (From Standardized Test Website):	For this assessment, the teacher should choose two or three sources that have a similar main idea or claim, but a different perspective. Here are some possible suggestions (From Standardized Test Website):

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>The Stripes Will Survive</i> by Jacqueline Adams ● <i>The Zoos Go Wild from No More Dodos</i> by Nicholas Nirgiotis and Theodore Nirgiotis ● <i>Our Beautiful Macaws and Why They Need Enrichment</i> by Alicia Powers <p>“You have read three texts that have a similar claim or main idea. (e.g. The role of a zoo is to protect animals.) Write an essay that compares and contrasts the evidence each source uses to support that claim. Be sure to use evidence from all three sources to support your response.</p> <p>In your writing, make sure you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Write an introduction. ● State your opinion or claim. ● Give reasons and evidence. ● Acknowledge counterclaims. ● Organize your writing. ● Use transition words. ● Write a conclusion.” <p>Score using the OPS Rubric for Argument Writing Grade 6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>The Stripes Will Survive</i> by Jacqueline Adams ● <i>The Zoos Go Wild from No More Dodos</i> by Nicholas Nirgiotis and Theodore Nirgiotis ● <i>Our Beautiful Macaws and Why They Need Enrichment</i> by Alicia Powers <p>“You have read three texts that have a similar claim or main idea. (e.g. The role of a zoo is to protect animals.) Write an essay that compares and contrasts the evidence each source uses to support that claim. Be sure to use evidence from all three sources to support your response.</p> <p>In your writing, make sure you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Write an introduction. ● State your opinion or claim. ● Give reasons and evidence. ● Acknowledge counterclaims. ● Organize your writing. ● Use transition words. ● Write a conclusion.” <p>Score using the OPS Rubric for Argument Writing Grade 6</p>
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Possible Ongoing Assessments

- Annotated compare and contrast essays
- Writer’s notebook entries
- Identifying the difference between compare and contrast structures
- Highlighted evidence
- Annotated text
- Boxes and bullets structure
- Identify and color code specific evidence
- Experiment with claim starters
- Exit tickets
- T-chart comparing three sources (e.g. flight attendant, waitress, McDonald’s worker)
- Published pieces assessed with the [OPS Rubric for Argument Writing Grade 6](#)

Standards (NJSLs) Addressed in this Unit


Reading

- RL.CR.6.1. Cite textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what a literary text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- RI.CR.6.1. Cite textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what an informational text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- RL.CI.6.2. Determine the theme of a literary text (e.g., stories, plays or poetry) and explain how it is supported by key details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

RI.CI.6.2. Determine the central idea of an informational text and explain how it is supported by key details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

RI.IT.6.3. Analyze how a particular text's (e.g., article, brochure, technical manual, procedural text) structure unfolds by using textual evidence to describe how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text

RI.MF.6.6. Integrate information when presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.

RI.AA.6.7. Trace the development of and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not. 

RL.CT.6.8. Compare and contrast literary texts in different forms, by different authors, or from different genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and primary source documents, scientific journals and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.

Writing

W.AW.6.1. Write arguments on discipline-specific content (e.g., social studies, science, math, technical subjects, English/Language Arts) to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

- A. Introduce claim(s) about a topic or issue and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- B. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant, accurate data and evidence, that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources.
- C. Use words, phrases, and clauses to link and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons and evidence.
- D. Establish and maintain a formal/academic style, approach, and form.
- E. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.

W.WP.6.4. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning; flexibly making editing and revision choices; sustaining effort to fit composition needs and purposes; and attempting to address purpose and audience.

W.RW.6.7. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Speaking & Listening

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

- A. Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
- B. Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.

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

D. Review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing.

SL.ES.6.3. Deconstruct a speaker's argument and specific claims, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.

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

SL.AS.6.6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Language

L.SS.6.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

A. Ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, possessive).

B. Use intensive pronouns (e.g. myself, ourselves).

C. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.

D. Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).

E. Recognize variations from standard English in their own and others' writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.

L.KL.6.2. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

A. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases.

B. Gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

C. Vary sentence patterns for meaning (syntax), reader/listener interest, and style/voice.

D. Maintain consistency in style and tone.

L.VI.6.3. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

A. Use context (e.g. the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

B. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g. audience, auditory, audible).

C. Consult reference materials (e.g. dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.

D. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g. by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

L.VI.6.4. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

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

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

C. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g. stingy, scrimping, economical, un wasteful, thrifty).

Computer Science and Design Thinking

8.2.8.ED.5: Explain the need for optimization in a design process.

Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills

9.4.8.GCA.1: Model how to navigate cultural differences with sensitivity and respect (e.g., 1.5.8.C1a).
9.4.8.GCA.2: Demonstrate openness to diverse ideas and perspectives through active discussions to achieve a group goal.

Practices

CLKSP1 Act as a responsible and contributing community member and employee.

CLKSP4 Demonstrate creativity and innovation.

CLKSP8 Use technology to enhance productivity, increase collaboration and communicate effectively.

CLKSP9 Work productively in teams while using cultural/global competence.

Interdisciplinary Connections

Social Studies

6.1.8.CivicsHR.3.c: Construct an argument to explain how the expansion of slavery violated human rights and contradicted American ideals.

Unit 5 Opinion: Comparing and Contrasting Main Ideas and Perspectives in Informational Texts

Suggested Teaching Points

Unit 4/Bend 1: Content and Structure of Compare and Contrast Essays

Writers will understand the content and structure of nonfiction, compare and contrast essays by...

- Noticing the structure of the “point by point” method and the “block” method when two or more sources are being compared and contrasted.
- Noticing the claims and types of topics.
- Noticing the genres of the texts discussed within nonfiction compare and contrast essays. (e.g. articles, videos, newspapers, magazines)
- Noticing how essays can convey powerful messages about issues in the past and present.
- Writing a model essay with the class.

Unit 4/Bend 2: Creating Theories and Claims

Writers will immerse themselves in comparing and contrasting the main ideas across texts by...

- Reading *Newse/la* articles on similar topics and identifying those commonalities.
- Comparing and contrasting the author’s purpose.
- Comparing and contrasting the main idea.
- Comparing and contrasting the perspective of each source.
- Comparing and contrasting the type of source being used to present the information.
- Using their theories to draft strong claims using claim starters:
 - Both ____ and ____ have the same main idea, but are developed differently.
 - Both ____ and ____ have a lot of differences, but they also have some similarities.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ____ and ____ are both ____. ○ ____ and ____ are alike and different. ○ ____ and ____ are different because ____, but when you look at them closely you can see that they are also both ____. ○ Both ____ and ____ deal with ____, but in different ways. ○ Both ____ and ____ learn ____, but they learn it differently. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deepening initial observations. ● Grouping comparisons under the umbrella of an idea. ● Making claims more precise and compelling.
<p><i>Writers will find evidence to support their claims by...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Thinking about the big reasons that prove their claim. ● Finding text evidence from each source to support their thinking. ● Highlighting and underlining text evidence by color. ● Creating strong topic sentences for each of their reasons. ● Experimenting with both the “point by point” and the “block” method. ● Finding and selecting powerful quotes. ● Quoting directly with attention to accuracy.

Unit 4/Bend 3: Drafting and Managing the Writing Process

<p><i>Writers will use their theories and planning to draft their essays by...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Applying what they have learned in the past. ● Using academic language. ● Quoting some parts of the text, storytelling other parts, and summarizing yet other parts. ● Organizing body paragraphs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “Point by point” method ○ “Block” method ● Creating strong introductory paragraphs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hook ○ Source titles ○ Summarize each source in relation to the thesis and thesis statement ● Creating strong concluding paragraphs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Restate thesis ○ Summarize the points made in the essay ○ Conveying a general thought about the world ● Using precise compare and contrast words to connect and transition from one idea to the next: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Comparing words: similarly, alike, same, both ○ Contrasting words: unlike, however, on the other hand ● Writing with greater independence. ● Taking the “bumps in the road” in stride by maintaining a growth mindset. ● Thinking about <i>how</i> to write an essay; not just <i>what</i> to write about.
<p><i>Writers will revise and edit their compare and contrast essays by...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Using peer editors to identify strengths, set goals and revise their evidence and explanations, as needed. ● Using the writing rubric to self-assess for paragraphs and organization.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Styling their final draft using appropriate formatting. (e.g. font, alignment and spacing) ● Reflecting on their writing decisions and the impact of those decisions. ● Using varied sentence structure to produce more sophisticated writing. ● Problem solving, as needed. ● Offering constructive feedback to peers.
Writers reflect on their achievements by...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sharing moments that they are proud of throughout the writing process. ● Celebrating their accomplishments during the writing unit. ● Choosing one essay to publish and celebrate. ● Publishing and celebrating as a community of writers.

Unit 4: Grammar/Mechanics

Objective, Possessive, Subjective Pronouns

Example: **He** went to the park with **her** sister.

Writers will understand objective, possessive, and subjective pronouns by...

- Analyzing and discussing examples and nonexamples.
- Identifying the pronouns in each sentence.
- Applying these strategies to their own writing pieces.

Suggested Modifications

These strategies can be adapted to scaffold for students needing more support or extend the learning for higher-level students. Differentiation is accomplished through content, process, product and learning environment.

Special Education Students

- Use various methods to understand a student's learning style: observation, surveys, and conferring
- Refer to student's IEP for goals and modifications.
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge.
- Use pre-assessment data to drive instruction.
- Use preferential seating.
- Use flexible grouping.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer's current ability.
- Allow students to orally construct their story and self-record to use as a reference in their writing.
- Edit spelling, grammar, and punctuation last.
- Provide frequent breaks.
- Use sentence starters or frames when possible.
- Allow choice in writing instruments. (e.g. pencil/pen/keyboard)
- Place students with appropriate and accountable peers for peer review and constructive criticism.
- Role play constructive criticism.
- Give direct instruction on the author's purpose.
- Use HoverCam to highlight color coding evidence.
- Give direct instruction with notes on quoting and formatting.

Students with 504 Plans

- Use various methods to understand a student's learning style: observation, surveys, and conferring
- Refer to student 504 plan for goals and modifications.
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge.
- Use pre-assessment data to drive instruction.
- Use preferential seating.
- Use flexible grouping.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer's current ability.
- Allow students to orally construct their story and self-record to use as a reference in their writing.
- Edit spelling, grammar, and punctuation last.
- Provide frequent breaks.
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- Allow choice in writing instruments. (e.g. pencil/pen/keyboard)
- Place students with appropriate and accountable peers for peer review and constructive criticism.
- Role play constructive criticism.
- Give direct instruction on the author's purpose.
- Use HoverCam to highlight color coding evidence.
- Give direct instruction with notes on quoting and formatting.

Students at Risk

- Use various methods to understand a student's learning style: observation, surveys, and conferring
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge.
- Use pre-assessment data to drive instruction.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer's current ability.
- Model productive and engaging partner talk.
- Allow for extended time.
- Set a writing goal for an assignment and then focus only on that goal.
- Edit spelling, grammar, and punctuation last.
- Use sentence starters or frames when possible.
- Place students with appropriate and accountable peers for peer review and constructive criticism.
- Provide an anchor chart on comparing and contrasting using the "point by point" method and the "block" method.
- Give direct instruction on the author's purpose.
- Use HoverCam to highlight color coding evidence.
- Give direct instruction with notes on quoting and formatting.

English Language Learners

- Use various methods to understand a student's learning style: observation, surveys, conferring, TCRWP Assessments for Argument Writing.
- Allow use of a bilingual dictionary.
- Allow use of handheld translators.
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer's current level.
- Model productive and engaging partner talk.
- Set a writing goal for an assignment and then focus only on that goal.
- Allow students to orally construct their story and self-record to use as a reference in their writing.
- Edit spelling, grammar, and punctuation last.
- Use sentence starters or frames when possible.
- Place students with appropriate and accountable peers for peer review and constructive criticism.

- Use HoverCam to highlight color coding evidence.
- Give direct instruction with notes on quoting and formatting.

Gifted and Talented

- Use various methods to understand a student’s learning style: observation, surveys, and conferring
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge.
- Use pre-assessment data to drive instruction.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer’s current ability.
- Provide opportunities to lead discussion.
- Set a writing goal for an assignment.
- Provide opportunities to use student notebooks as an example.
- Provide opportunities for students to create their own extension project.

Social Emotional Learning Competencies

- **Self-Awareness:** ability to recognize one’s emotions and know one’s strengths and limitations
 - Connections:
 - Students will be working with partners or in small groups. It is important for students to understand that everyone has different strengths and areas of growth. The teacher helps support students with this.
 - Use of student/teacher specific praise regularly on student areas of strength and areas that have been improving.
 - Check-in on feelings (thumbs up, down, in the middle). This helps the teacher know who might need additional support.
- **Self-Management:** ability to regulate and control one’s emotions and behaviors, particularly in stressful situations
 - Connections:
 - Applying Open Circle strategies such as belly breathing when feeling upset or anxious.
 - Cool down spot in the classroom to take a break. Students are encouraged to use it to help refocus as needed.
 - Use of fidget toys as needed.
- **Social Awareness:** ability to take the perspective of others, demonstrate empathy, acknowledge and appreciate similarities and differences, and understand how one’s actions influence and are influenced by others
 - Connections:
 - Students becoming the “expert” helper to support others in their work.
 - Practicing active listening strategies when classmates are speaking.
 - Use of “I messages” when resolving conflicts.
- **Relationship Skills:** refers to one’s ability to demonstrate prosocial skills and behaviors in order to develop meaningful relationships and resolve interpersonal conflicts
 - Connections:
 - Sharing materials, taking turns, understanding that everyone may not always get a turn for every activity.
 - Use of “I messages” when resolving conflicts.

- Use of active listening strategies, i.e. repeating what you heard your partner say when discussion conflicts.
- **Responsible Decision-Making:** refers to the ability to use multiple pieces of information to make ethical and responsible decisions
 - Connections:
 - Class rules
 - Class discussions
 - Following rules

Suggested Mentor Texts

[Wolong's Pandas Video Clip](#)

[Pandas: An Endangered Species Text](#)

[Bamboo Mountain Video Clip](#)

[Compare and Contrast Information from Multiple Sources - Wolong's Pandas](#)

[Primary Source: A Soldier's Account of the Cherokee Indian Trail of Tears](#) by Private John G. Burnette, adapted by Newsela staff

[A Survivor's Perspective of the Holocaust Video](#)

[Japanese-American Relocation in the US During World War II](#) by National Archives, adapted by Newsela

The Stripes Will Survive by Jacqueline Adams

The Zoos Go Wild from No More Dodos by Nicholas Nirgiotis and Theodore Nirgiotis

Our Beautiful Macaws and Why They Need Enrichment by Alicia Powers

Professional Resources

[PBS Learning Compare and Contrast Panda Activity](#)

Units of Study in Argument, Information, and Narrative Writing: The Literary Essay, From Character to Compare/Contrast, Grade 6, Unit 2 Argument by Lucy Calkins, Kate Roberts, Kathleen Tolan

The Writing Strategies Book: Your Everything Guide to Developing Skilled Writers by Jennifer Serravallo

Unit 5 Opinion: The Research-based Argumentative Essay Debating Global Issues

Unit Overview

In *The Research-based Argumentative Essay Debating Global Issues* writing unit, students will explore topics that they are passionate about. They will brainstorm ideas by looking at the world to discover topics that they feel strongly about and want to explore more deeply, including climate change. Students will distinguish the difference between facts and opinions and use this knowledge to research and explore their topic. Students will use their research to develop claims about global issues. Writers will organize the information that they come across in their research into sub categories and use this to support their claim. They will use a combination of feelings, facts, statistics, data, quotes, and stories to support their ideas. Students will draft using everything they know about the structure of an essay. They will have strong introductions that engage their readers and propose a new angle or perspective to their topic. Students will recognize the counterclaim or rebuttal of their argument, and use it creatively to strengthen their arguments. Writers will elaborate and use transitions to connect their thinking. Students will cite their information and sources within their work. Students will provide each other feedback in the form of compliments and suggestions. While writers are drafting, they will also revise and edit. At the end of the unit, writers will celebrate their accomplishments and published pieces with their peers.

Enduring Understandings

Writers will...

- Choose topics that they are passionate about.
- Consider local issues, including climate change.
- Become experts on their topics by researching and mining for new insights.
- Develop strong claims.
- Organize their evidence into sub categories or body paragraphs.
- Use a combination of evidence, quotes, statistics, facts, data, and stories to support their thinking.
- Use a variety of different persuasive techniques to strengthen their argument.
- Draft strong introductions and conclusions.
- Recognize and include the counterclaim to strengthen an argument.
- Elaborate on their ideas.
- Use everything they know about the structure of an essay.
- Cite their sources within their writing.
- Use intensive pronouns correctly.
- Celebrate and publish as a community of writers.

Assessment

Pre-assessment	Post-assessment
“Think of a topic or issue that you know and care about, an issue around which you have strong feelings. You will have 45 minutes to write an opinion or argument text in which you will write your opinion or claim and tell reasons why you feel that way. When you do this, draw on everything you know about essays, persuasive letters, and reviews. Please keep in mind that you’ll have 45	“Think of a topic or issue that you know and care about, an issue around which you have strong feelings. You will have 45 minutes to write an opinion or argument text in which you will write your opinion or claim and tell reasons why you feel that way. When you do this, draw on everything you know about essays, persuasive letters, and reviews. Please keep in mind that you’ll have 45

minutes to complete this, so you will need to plan, draft, revise, and edit in one sitting.”

“In your writing, make sure you:

- Write an introduction.
- State your opinion or claim.
- Give reasons and evidence.
- Organize your writing.
- Acknowledge counterclaims.
- Use transition words.
- Write a conclusion.”

Score using the [OPS Rubric for Argument Writing Grade 6](#)

minutes to complete this, so you will need to plan, draft, revise, and edit in one sitting.”

“In your writing, make sure you:

- Write an introduction.
- State your opinion or claim.
- Give reasons and evidence.
- Organize your writing.
- Acknowledge counterclaims.
- Use transition words.
- Write a conclusion.”

Score using the [OPS Rubric for Argument Writing Grade 6](#)

Possible Ongoing Assessments

- Teacher observations
- Student participation
- Individual writing conferences
- Small group instruction
- Writing partners
- Writer’s notebook entries
- Google Classroom
- Partner talk and feedback
- Class sharing
- Exit tickets
- Annotated *Newse/a* articles
- Debating topics with peers
- Creating a class list of topics
- Watch television and look for examples of ethos, pathos, and logos at play
- Bring in magazines and find images that use persuasive techniques
- Persuade someone to buy an undesirable object, such as a pencil, using a variety of facts
- Published pieces assessed using the [OPS Rubric for Argument Writing Grade 6](#)

Standards (NJSLs) Addressed in this Unit

Reading Informational Text

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

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

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

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

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.

RI.6.9 Compare, contrast, and reflect on (e.g. practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) one author’s presentation of events with that of another (e.g. a memoir written by and a biography written on the same person.)

RI.6.10 By the end of the year read and comprehend literary nonfiction at grade level text-complexity or above, with scaffolding as needed.

Writing

- W.AW.6.1. Write arguments on discipline-specific content (e.g., social studies, science, math, technical subjects, English/Language Arts) to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
- A. Introduce claim(s) about a topic or issue and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
 - B. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant, accurate data and evidence, that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources.
 - C. Use words, phrases, and clauses to link and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons and evidence.
 - D. Establish and maintain a formal/academic style, approach, and form.
 - E. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.
- W.WP.6.4. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning; flexibly making editing and revision choices; sustaining effort to fit composition needs and purposes; and attempting to address purpose and audience.
- W.RW.6.7. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Speaking & Listening

- SL.PE.6.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- A. Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
 - B. Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
 - C. Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion.
 - D. Review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing.
- SL.ES.6.3. Deconstruct a speaker's argument and specific claims, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.
- SL.PI.6.4. Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate speaking behaviors (e.g., eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation).
- SL.AS.6.6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Language

- L.SS.6.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- A. Ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, possessive).
 - B. Use intensive pronouns (e.g. myself, ourselves).
 - C. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.
 - D. Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).

E. Recognize variations from standard English in their own and others' writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.

L.KL.6.2. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

A. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases.

B. Gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

C. Vary sentence patterns for meaning (syntax), reader/listener interest, and style/voice.

D. Maintain consistency in style and tone.

L.VI.6.3. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

A. Use context (e.g. the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

B. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g. audience, auditory, audible).

C. Consult reference materials (e.g. dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.

D. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g. by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

L.VI.6.4. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

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

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

C. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g. stingy, scrimping, economical, un wasteful, thrifty).

Computer Science and Design Thinking

8.2.8.ED.5: Explain the need for optimization in a design process.

Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills

9.4.8.GCA.1: Model how to navigate cultural differences with sensitivity and respect (e.g., 1.5.8.C1a).

9.4.8.GCA.2: Demonstrate openness to diverse ideas and perspectives through active discussions to achieve a group goal.

9.4.8.IML.8: Apply deliberate and thoughtful search strategies to access high-quality information on climate change (e.g., 1.1.8.C1b).

9.4.8.CI.1: Assess data gathered on varying perspectives on causes of climate change (e.g., cross cultural, gender-specific, generational), and determine how the data can best be used to design multiple potential solutions (e.g., RI.7.9, 6.SP.B.5, 7.1.NH.IPERS.6, 8.2.8.ETW.4).

9.4.8.CT.1: Evaluate diverse solutions proposed by a variety of individuals, organizations, and/or agencies to a local or global problem, such as climate change, and use critical thinking skills to predict which one(s) are likely to be effective (e.g., MS-ETS1-2).

9.4.8.CT.2: Develop multiple solutions to a problem and evaluate short- and long-term effects to determine the most plausible option (e.g., MS-ETS1-4, 6.1.8.CivicsDP.1).

9.4.8.CT.3: Compare past problem-solving solutions to local, national, or global issues and analyze the factors that led to a positive or negative outcome.

Practices

CLKSP1 Act as a responsible and contributing community member and employee.
 CLKSP4 Demonstrate creativity and innovation.
 CLKSP8 Use technology to enhance productivity, increase collaboration and communicate effectively.
 CLKSP9 Work productively in teams while using cultural/global competence.

Interdisciplinary Connections

Social Studies

6.3.8.CivicsPR.4: Use evidence and quantitative data to propose or defend a public policy related to climate change.

Unit 5: Opinion: The Research-based Argumentative Essay Debating Global Issues, Including Climate Change
Suggested Teaching Points

Unit 5/Bend 1: Establishing and Supporting Positions

Writers will immerse themselves in the argumentative writing unit and discover topics they are passionate about by...

- Distinguishing the difference between fact and opinion:
 - Facts are proven.
 - Opinions are supported by facts.
- Defining argument.
- Identifying the elements of an argument.
- Reading argumentative essays and paying close attention to the structure.
- Thinking about topics that bother them in the world.
- Thinking about things that they love in the world.
- Looking deeply within their hearts for topics that they are passionate about.
- Brainstorming wonderings or questions that they have about the world.
- Thinking about things that are broken in the world.
- Looking at current issues, topics and news articles.
- Thinking about *CNN Student News* topics.
- Looking at debate topics and thinking deeply about what side they agree and/or disagree with.
- Flash drafting about the topic to generate more ideas.
- Choosing an issue to address and developing their voice on that issue.
- Using past experiences with researching historical topics.

Writers will become experts on their topics to develop claims by...

- Supporting their claim with the most effective evidence.
- Using a variety of different credible sources.
- Researching about their topics to become experts.
- Narrowing their claim.
- Thinking about the angles that exist within their claim.
- Developing a strong claim that they are passionate about.
- Thinking about the other side of the argument in preparation for the counterclaim.
- Considering not only quantity, but also relevance of text evidence.

Unit 5/Bend 2: Building Powerful Arguments

<p><i>Writers will organize their ideas into big reasons by...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Using evidence to build arguments. ● Making deliberate choices about how to order their information. ● Developing subtopics to their claim. ● Thinking about the big reasons that support that claim. ● Organizing information into subcategories. ● Organizing evidence, quotes, statistics, and data within those subtopics. ● Highlighting noteworthy evidence.
<p><i>Writers will draft using everything they know about the structure of essay and their research by...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Flash drafting arguments. ● Including varied kinds of information such as facts, quotations, examples, and definitions. ● Using quotations to bolster an argument. ● Using transitional phrases between writing and a quotation. ● Choosing words carefully to explain information and ideas. ● Having an effect on the reader. ● Thinking through evidence, point by point. ● Working to include concrete details. ● Incorporating domain-specific vocabulary and, when necessary, explaining these terms. ● Providing parenthetical explanations. ● Supporting readers' learning by using a formal tone. ● Using punctuation to help include extra information and explanations. (e.g. dashes, parentheses, colons, and semicolons) ● Using transitions to help readers understand how different bits of information fit together. ● Using relevant information. ● Defining counterclaim. ● Balancing evidence with analysis.
<p><i>Writers will take arguments up a notch by...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Concentrating on word choice and tone to lift the level of an essay. ● Recognizing the counterclaim to make their argument stronger. ● Using prompts for rebutting counterclaims. ● Identifying where and when to include counterclaims and rebuttals. ● Thinking about the other side of the argument, but making your side stronger. ● Writing strong conclusions that leave readers thinking by studying and emulating a mentor conclusion for qualities of strong endings. ● Bringing a critical perspective to writing. ● Rehearsing the whole and refining the part. ● Being on the lookout for flawed arguments and, if necessary, return to the research. ● Understanding and appealing to a specific audience. ● Choosing the right words for a particular audience. ● Using a variety of persuasive techniques to support their claims: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ethos, logos, pathos

Unit 5/Bend 3: Drafting and Revising with the Goal of Publishing

<p>Writers will edit and revise with a purpose by...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Using peer editors to identify strengths, set goals and revise their evidence and explanations, as needed. ● Using the writing rubric to self-assess for paragraphs and organization. ● Reflecting on their writing decisions and the impact of those decisions. ● Using varied sentence structure to produce more sophisticated writing. ● Problem solving, as needed. ● Offering constructive feedback to their peers. ● Evaluating the validity of their argument. ● Playing devil's advocate and spotting the biased sample.
<p>Writers will celebrate as a community of writers by...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sharing moments that they are proud of throughout the writing process. ● Celebrating their accomplishments during the writing unit. ● Choosing one claim to publish and celebrate. ● Reading the work of their classmates. ● Leaving peers positive compliments and helpful feedback. ● Choosing their favorite reasons to share with the class. ● Publishing and celebrating as a community of writers.

Unit 5: Grammar/Mechanics

Intensive Pronouns
 Example: Jim bought himself a pizza.

Writers will understand intensive pronouns by...

- Analyzing and discussing examples and nonexamples.
- Identifying the intensive pronouns in each sentence.
- Applying these strategies to their own writing pieces.

Inappropriate Shifts in Pronouns
 Examples: As **we** rode into town, **we** could hear the silence of the frightened residents.
 As **the soldiers** rode into town, **they** could hear the silence of the frightened residents.

1. Use the same pronoun in our sentences.
2. A better solution is to use a noun in the first part of the sentence. In this manner, the pronoun use in the second part becomes almost obvious.

Writers will understand shifts in pronouns by...

- Analyzing and discussing examples and nonexamples.
- Identifying the continuity of pronouns agreement in text.
- Applying these strategies to their own writing pieces.

Suggested Modifications
These strategies can be adapted to scaffold for students needing more support or extend the learning for higher-level students. Differentiation is accomplished through content, process, product and learning environment.

Special Education Students

- Use various methods to understand a student’s learning style: observation, surveys, and conferring
- Refer to the student’s IEP for goals and modifications.
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge.
- Use pre-assessment data to drive instruction.
- Use preferential seating.
- Use flexible grouping.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer’s current ability.
- Set a writing goal for an assignment and then focus only on that goal.
- Allow students to orally construct their story and self-record to use as a reference in their writing.
- Edit spelling, grammar, and punctuation last.
- Provide frequent breaks.
- Use sentence starters or frames when possible.
- Define global issues and give concrete examples.
- Build an anchor chart on fact and opinion and refer to it throughout the unit.
- Provide direct instruction on finding and using data in your writing.

Students with 504 Plans

- Use various methods to understand a student’s learning style: observation, surveys, and conferring
- Refer to the student’s 504 plan for goals and modifications.
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge.
- Use pre-assessment data to drive instruction.
- Use preferential seating.
- Use flexible grouping.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer’s current ability.
- Set a writing goal for an assignment and then focus only on that goal.
- Allow students to orally construct their story and self-record to use as a reference in their writing.
- Edit spelling, grammar, and punctuation last.
- Provide frequent breaks.
- Use sentence starters or frames when possible.
- Define global issues and give concrete examples.
- Build an anchor chart on fact and opinion and refer to it throughout the unit.
- Provide direct instruction on finding and using data in your writing.

Students at Risk

- Use various methods to understand a student’s learning style: observation, surveys, and conferring
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge and allow them to build on that knowledge.
- Use pre-assessment data to drive instruction.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer’s current ability.
- Model productive and engaging partner talk.
- Set a writing goal for an assignment and then focus only on that goal.
- Edit spelling, grammar, and punctuation last.
- Use sentence starters or frames when possible.
- Define global issues and give concrete examples.
- Build an anchor chart on fact and opinion and refer to it throughout the unit.
- Provide direct instruction on finding and using data in your writing.

English Language Learners

- Use various methods to understand a student’s learning style: observation, surveys, and conferring

- Allow use of a bilingual dictionary.
- Allow use of handheld translators.
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer's current level.
- Model productive and engaging partner talk.
- Set a writing goal for an assignment and then focus only on that goal.
- Allow students to orally construct their story and self-record to use as a reference in their writing.
- Edit spelling, grammar, and punctuation last.
- Provide frequent breaks.
- Use sentence starters or frames when possible.
- Define global issues and give concrete examples (including visuals).
- Provide direct instruction on finding and using data in your writing.

Gifted and Talented

- Use various methods to understand a student's learning style: observation, surveys, and conferring
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge.
- Use pre-assessment data to drive instruction.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer's current level.
- Provide opportunities for students to lead discussion.
- Set a writing goal for the assignment.
- Provide opportunities to use student notebooks as an example.
- Provide opportunities for students to write both sides of the issue with counterclaims.

Social Emotional Learning Competencies

- **Self-Awareness:** ability to recognize one's emotions and know one's strengths and limitations
 - Connections:
 - Students will be working with partners or in small groups. It is important for students to understand that everyone has different strengths and areas of growth. The teacher helps support students with this.
 - Use of student/teacher specific praise regularly on student areas of strength and areas that have been improving.
 - Check-in on feelings (thumbs up, down, in the middle). This helps the teacher know who might need additional support.
- **Self-Management:** ability to regulate and control one's emotions and behaviors, particularly in stressful situations
 - Connections:
 - Applying Open Circle strategies such as belly breathing when feeling upset or anxious.
 - Cool down spot in the classroom to take a break. Students are encouraged to use it to help refocus as needed.
 - Use of fidget toys as needed.
- **Social Awareness:** ability to take the perspective of others, demonstrate empathy, acknowledge and appreciate similarities and differences, and understand how one's actions influence and are influenced by others
 - Connections:
 - Students becoming the "expert" helper to support others in their work.

- Practicing active listening strategies when classmates are speaking.
 - Use of “I messages” when resolving conflicts.
- **Relationship Skills:** refers to one’s ability to demonstrate prosocial skills and behaviors in order to develop meaningful relationships and resolve interpersonal conflicts
 - Connections:
 - Sharing materials, taking turns, understanding that everyone may not always get a turn for every activity.
 - Use of “I messages” when resolving conflicts.
 - Use of active listening strategies, i.e. repeating what you heard your partner say when discussion conflicts.
- **Responsible Decision-Making:** refers to the ability to use multiple pieces of information to make ethical and responsible decisions
 - Connections:
 - Class rules
 - Class discussions
 - Following rules

Possible Mentor Texts

No Track Tryouts by various students

The Vicious and Terrifying Breed: Pit Bulls by various students

Pit Bulls, The Side That is Right by various students

Chocolate Milk is Good, and Good For You by various students

Newsela

Scholastic Leveled Book Room 4.0

Professional Resources

Units of Study in Argument, Information, and Narrative Writing: If... Then... Curriculum, Assessment Based Instruction, Grades 6-8, Text Page 31 by Lucy Calkins with Colleagues from TCRWP

Units of Study in Opinion, Information, and Narrative Writing: The Research Based Argument Essay, Grade 5, Unit 4 Argument by Lucy Calkins, Mary Ehrenworth, Anne Taranto

The Writing Strategies Book: Your Everything Guide to Developing Skilled Writers by Jennifer Serravallo

Unit 6 Narrative: Memoir

Unit Overview

In the *Memoir* writing unit, students will write memoirs that involve an important time from their life, and reflect on how it is significant. For example, students may write about first times, last times, or accomplishments. In this unit, writers will find the meaning or significance of the memoir by finding a theme or lesson learned as the main focus of their piece. Students will explain the bigger picture of their personal experience and how it has shaped them. Students will write a short reflection in addition to a narrative writing piece. Students will collect entries, drafts, and freewriting from their writer’s notebooks in order to develop a small moment. They will learn that writers of memoirs include characteristics of narrative writing. Students will relive through small moments from their lives, then step back to analyze the themes and lessons that those moments convey. Students will learn strategies about conveying important information about themselves through the experience that they describe. They will purposefully learn how to examine mentor texts, how to determine text structures best suited for their intended meaning, and how to use the writing process to publish and present their memoirs with sophistication. Students may choose to publish their work by creating “Six-Word Memoirs” to describe themselves and/or the sixth grade year.

Enduring Understandings

Writers will...

- Revisit the most significant memories of their lives and elaborate on them.
- Select a memory from their lives and retell it in a way that brings their experience to life.
- Reflect back on the memory and identify the message they want to convey.
- Convey the significance/message of their chosen memory.
- Develop their pieces through the writing process.
- Use figurative language to strengthen their stories.
- Use strong and specific vocabulary to contribute to the mood or tone of the piece.
- Correct vague pronouns.
- Celebrate and publish as a community of writers.

Assessments

Pre-assessment	Post-assessment
<p>“I’m really eager to understand what you can do as writers of narratives, of stories, so today will you please write the best memoir, the best story about an important, life changing or emotional moment from your life that you never want to forget. Make this be the story of one time in your life. You might focus on just a scene or two. You’ll have only 45 minutes to write this true, life-changing story, so you’ll need to plan, draft, revise, and edit in one sitting. Write in a way that allows you to show off all you know about narrative writing.</p> <p>In your writing, make sure you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Write a beginning for your memoir.● Use transition words to tell what happened in order.	<p>“I’m really eager to understand what you can do as writers of narratives, of stories, so today will you please write the best memoir, the best story about an important, life changing or emotional moment from your life that you never want to forget. Make this be the story of one time in your life. You might focus on just a scene or two. You’ll have only 45 minutes to write this true, life-changing story, so you’ll need to plan, draft, revise, and edit in one sitting. Write in a way that allows you to show off all you know about narrative writing.</p> <p>In your writing, make sure you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Write a beginning for your memoir.● Use transition words to tell what happened in order.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Elaborate to help the readers picture your story. ● Show what the moment meant to you. ● Write an ending for your story that shows you learned something or changed the way you look at things.” <p>Score using the OPS Rubric for Narrative Writing Grade 6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Elaborate to help the readers picture your story. ● Show what the moment meant to you. ● Write an ending for your story that shows you learned something or changed the way you look at things.” <p>Score using the OPS Rubric for Narrative Writing Grade 6</p>
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Possible Ongoing Assessments

- Writing notebook entries:
 - What does this memoir show about you?
 - Why did you choose this story to develop?
- Partner discussions
- Conferring
- Read stories and answer questions about the following: the topic, the relationship, the author’s purpose, how the author showed that this relationship matters to them, what are the thoughts and feelings about this relationship, what sensory details does the author use to describe the relationship?
- Annotated mentor texts
- Double timeline of the events and feelings that those events evoked
- “Six-Word Memoirs”
- Draw a picture of a time you felt a strong feeling
- Act out a portion of the memoir
- Published pieces assessed with the [OPS Rubric for Narrative Writing Grade 6](#)

Standards (NJSLs) Addressed in this Unit

Reading

- RI.CR.6.1. Cite textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what an informational text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- RI.CI.6.2. Determine the central idea of an informational text and explain how it is supported by key details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
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- RL.TS.6.4. Analyze how a particular piece (e.g., sentence, chapter, scene, stanza, or section) fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas, theme, setting, or plot.
- RL.PP.6.5. Determine how an author conveys or develops perspective in a text (through the narrator or speaker when appropriate).

Writing

- W.NW.6.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
- A. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
 - B. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

- C. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.
- D. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events.
- E. Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.

W.WP.6.4. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning; flexibly making editing and revision choices; sustaining effort to fit composition needs and purposes; and attempting to address purpose and audience.

W.RW.6.7. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Speaking & Listening

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

- A. Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
- B. Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
- C. Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion.
- D. Review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing.

Language

L.SS.6.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

- A. Ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, possessive).
- B. Use intensive pronouns (e.g. myself, ourselves).
- C. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.
- D. Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).
- E. Recognize variations from standard English in their own and others' writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.

L.KL.6.2. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

- A. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases.
- B. Gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.
- C. Vary sentence patterns for meaning (syntax), reader/listener interest, and style/voice.
- D. Maintain consistency in style and tone.

L.VI.6.3. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

- A. Use context (e.g. the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
- B. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g. audience, auditory, audible).

- C. Consult reference materials (e.g. dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.
- D. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g. by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).

L.VI.6.4. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

- A. Interpret figures of speech (e.g. personification) in context.
- B. Use the relationship between particular words (e.g. cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words.
- C. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g. stingy, scrimping, economical, un wasteful, thrifty).

Computer Science and Design Thinking

8.2.8.ED.5: Explain the need for optimization in a design process.

Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills

9.4.8.GCA.1: Model how to navigate cultural differences with sensitivity and respect (e.g., 1.5.8.C1a).
 9.4.8.GCA.2: Demonstrate openness to diverse ideas and perspectives through active discussions to achieve a group goal.

Practices

- CLKSP1 Act as a responsible and contributing community member and employee.
- CLKSP4 Demonstrate creativity and innovation.
- CLKSP8 Use technology to enhance productivity, increase collaboration and communicate effectively.
- CLKSP9 Work productively in teams while using cultural/global competence.

Interdisciplinary Connections

Theatre Arts

1.4.8.Pr6a: Perform a rehearsed theatrical work for an audience.

Unit 6 Narrative: Memoir Suggested Teaching Points

Unit 6/Bend 1: Immersion and Generating Ideas

Writers will understand the content and structure of memoir by...

- Noticing that memoirs are written about one memory of significance and told in detail.
- Realizing that they are moments that marked someone’s life forever.
- Understanding that they are often written about life-changing events.
- Comprehending that they are a snapshot in time—not the entire photo album.
- Identifying that memoirs explain the significance of some type of a relationship:
 - Relationships with people, places, objects, animals, significant events, life experiences
- Discussing and thinking about different relationships in their lives and the teacher’s life.
- Looking at examples of memoirs and answering the following questions:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What kinds of topics are written about in memoirs? ○ What feelings are palpable when reading a memoir? ● Comparing and contrasting a narrative and a memoir.
<p><i>Writers will generate their own ideas by...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Drawing on known strategies to collect and develop small moment story ideas. ● Looking back through their writer’s notebook for inspiration. ● Looking at a photograph of a special event. ● Making a memory timeline of one’s life, keeping in mind: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Family stories ○ Crisis moments ○ Issues in one’s life ○ Times of embarrassment ○ Role models ○ Peer pressure ○ Friendship ○ Items/objects that are special to you ● Thinking about how these specific relationships made them feel. ● Creating a memory box: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bringing in a box with all different objects that make them think of something specific ● Visualizing their ideas. ● Creating a memory web using precise words and descriptions. ● Thinking about strong sensory moments. (e.g. specific remembered smells, the feel of a favorite sweater) ● Thinking about role models. ● Reflecting on times of embarrassment. ● Identifying times that taught them something or made them realize something. ● Asking family members to tell them stories about what they were like when they were young: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Watching home videos ○ Looking at photo albums ● Brainstorming lists of important relationships: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Relationships with people, places, objects, animals, significant events, life experiences (e.g. a special picture frame, blanket, grandmother, pet) ● Drawing a picture of a relationship and everything that comes to mind when they think of it. ● Creating timelines of specific seed ideas; include the events and the feelings that were experienced at the time.

<p>Unit 6/Bend 2: Drafting with a Goal to Publish</p>	
<p><i>Writers will start filling the pages of their writer’s notebooks by...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Flash drafting their ideas. ● Writing to find depth in already uncovered ideas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Thinking: “Where is the mystery in this topic or idea?” ● Exploring the unknown in the known. ● Investigating ideas for patterns and themes. ● Being on the lookout for recurring emotions.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Going back and adding more details about how they were feeling: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This made me feel... ○ This matters to me because... ○ I used to think ____, but after more reflection, now I think ____. ● Zooming in and thinking about what they are really writing about. ● Stretching out the important parts by slowing them down with more sensory details. (e.g. seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, touching/feeling) ● Using figurative language to bring their story to life. ● Using all they know from mentor texts to inspire their own stories that are worth telling. ● Using mentor texts to inform and adjust structure. ● Structuring their texts in a variety of ways. ● Focusing a story on themselves—not just the events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What are you really trying to say in this piece? ● Writing in ways that highlight what they are trying to say. ● Crafting different beginnings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Action, dialogue, a thought or feeling, sound effect ● Creating extended story endings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Memory of the main event ○ A decision or defining action ○ End with the hopes and wishes ○ The character’s feelings
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Unit 6/Bend 3: Editing, Reflecting, and Publishing

<p><i>Writers will revise and edit for meaning by...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Setting goals for revision. ● Using checklists to enhance their work. ● Using constructive feedback from their writing partners. ● Looking for words that seem “off” as they read—and reread. ● Reading their writing backwards for spelling and to check for proper sentence structure: run-ons and fragments. ● Reading their writing out loud to hear what still needs fixing. ● Giving their writing one last read-through.
<p><i>Writers will publish and celebrate as a community of writers by...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Writing a “Six-Word Memoir” to share with the class. ● Rehearsing to read and then recording their writing. ● Handwriting their memoirs and hanging them around the room. ● Publishing memoirs by theme (examples): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pets and Our Lives ○ Learning to Be Strong ○ Before We Were Six ● Providing positive compliments and helpful feedback to their peers.

Unit 6: Grammar/Mechanics

<p>Correct Vague Pronouns Example: Jane went to visit Karen, which made her happy.</p> <p>Writers will understand vague pronouns by...</p>

- Analyzing and discussing examples and nonexamples.
- Identifying the pronouns in each sentence.
- Applying these strategies to their own writing pieces.

Suggested Modifications

These strategies can be adapted to scaffold for students needing more support or extend the learning for higher-level students. Differentiation is accomplished through content, process, product and learning environment.

Special Education Students

- Use various methods to understand a student’s learning style: observation, surveys, and conferring
- Refer to student IEP for goals and modifications.
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge.
- Use pre-assessment data to drive instruction.
- Use preferential seating.
- Use flexible grouping.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer’s current ability.
- Model productive and engaging partner talk.
- Allow for extended time.
- Allow for extended conferring.
- Provide guided notes as necessary.
- Set a writing goal for an assignment and then focus only on that goal.
- Allow students to orally construct their story and self-record to use as a reference in their writing.
- Provide frequent breaks.
- Allow choice in writing instruments. (e.g. pencil/pen/keyboard)

Students with 504 Plans

- Use various methods to understand a student’s learning style: observation, surveys, and conferring. Refer to student 504 plan for goals and modifications.
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge.
- Use pre-assessment data to drive instruction.
- Use preferential seating.
- Use flexible grouping.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer’s current ability.
- Model productive and engaging partner talk.
- Allow for extended time.
- Allow for extended conferring.
- Provide guided notes as necessary.
- Set a writing goal for an assignment and then focus only on that goal.
- Allow students to orally construct their story and self-record to use as a reference in their writing.
- Provide frequent breaks.
- Allow choice in writing instruments. (e.g. pencil/pen/keyboard)

Students at Risk

- Use various methods to understand a student’s learning style: observation, surveys, and conferring
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge.
- Use pre-assessment data to drive instruction.
- Use preferential seating.
- Use flexible grouping.

- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer's current ability.
- Model productive and engaging partner talk.
- Set a writing goal for an assignment and then focus only on that goal.
- Allow students to orally construct their story and self-record to use as a reference in their writing.
- Edit spelling, grammar, and punctuation last.
- Provide frequent breaks.
- Use sentence starters or frames when possible.

English Language Learners

- Use various methods to understand a student's learning style: observation, surveys, conferring, TCRWP Assessments for Narrative Writing.
- Allow use of a bilingual dictionary.
- Allow use of handheld translators.
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge.
- Use pre-assessment data to drive instruction.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists to the writer's current ability, not grade level.
- Model productive and engaging partner talk.
- Set a writing goal for an assignment and then focus only on that goal.
- Allow students to orally construct their story and self-record to use as a reference in their writing.
- Edit spelling, grammar, and punctuation last.
- Provide frequent breaks.
- Allow choice in writing instruments. (e.g. pencil/pen/keyboard)

Gifted and Talented

- Use various methods to understand a student's learning style: observation, surveys, and conferring
- Ask students to recall together what they already learned in ways that activate their prior knowledge.
- Use pre-assessment data to drive instruction.
- Use learning progressions, rubrics and checklists that are appropriate to the writer's current ability.
- Provide opportunities to lead discussion.
- Use flexible grouping.
- Set a writing goal for an assignment.
- Provide opportunities to use student notebooks as an example.
- Allow for extension activities such as a more in depth memoir as crafted in later grades.

Social Emotional Learning Competencies

- **Self-Awareness:** ability to recognize one's emotions and know one's strengths and limitations
 - Connections:
 - Students will be working with partners or in small groups. It is important for students to understand that everyone has different strengths and areas of growth. The teacher helps support students with this.
 - Use of student/teacher specific praise regularly on student areas of strength and areas that have been improving.
 - Check-in on feelings (thumbs up, down, in the middle). This helps the teacher know who might need additional support.
- **Self-Management:** ability to regulate and control one's emotions and behaviors, particularly in stressful situations

- Connections:
 - Applying Open Circle strategies such as belly breathing when feeling upset or anxious.
 - Cool down spot in classroom to take a break. Students are encouraged to use it to help refocus as needed.
 - Use of fidget toys as needed.
- **Social Awareness:** ability to take the perspective of others, demonstrate empathy, acknowledge and appreciate similarities and differences, and understand how one's actions influence and are influenced by others
 - Connections:
 - Students becoming the "expert" helper to support others in their work.
 - Practicing active listening strategies when classmates are speaking.
 - Use of "I messages" when resolving conflicts.
- **Relationship Skills:** refers to one's ability to demonstrate prosocial skills and behaviors in order to develop meaningful relationships and resolve interpersonal conflicts
 - Connections:
 - Sharing materials, taking turns, understanding that everyone may not always get a turn for every activity.
 - Use of "I messages" when resolving conflicts.
 - Use of active listening strategies, i.e. repeating what you heard your partner say when discussion conflicts.
- **Responsible Decision-Making:** refers to the ability to use multiple pieces of information to make ethical and responsible decisions
 - Connections:
 - Class rules
 - Class discussions
 - Following rules

Suggested Mentor Texts

[What's a Memoir? \(short video by Shmoop\)](#)

[Six-Word Memoirs](#)

[Owen](#) by Kevin Henkes (person and object)

[Christmas Day Kitten](#) by James Herriot (person and animal)

[Sunflower House](#) by Eve Bunting (person and place)

[When I Was Young in the Mountains](#) by Cynthia Rylant (person and place)

[Thundercake](#) by Patricia Polacco (person and person)

[The Bracelet](#) by Yoshiko Uchida (person and person)

[Chicken Sunday](#) by Patricia Polacco (person and person)

[My Rotten Redheaded Older Brother](#) by Patricia Polacco (person and person)

[An A from Miss Keller](#) by Patricia Polacco (person and person)

[Uncle Jed's Barbershop](#) by Margaree Mitchell (person and person)

Professional Resources

Units of Study in Argument, Information, and Narrative Writing: If... Then... Curriculum, Assessment Based Instruction, Grades 6-8, Text Page 44 by Lucy Calkins with Colleagues from TCRWP

The Writing Strategies Book: Your Everything Guide to Developing Skilled Writers by Jennifer Serravallo