

Grade 6 curriculum map

6A: Dahl & Narrative



Unit summary

Students begin with narrative writing to quickly boost their writing production, learn the foundational skill of Focus, and become comfortable with key classroom habits and routines they will use all year. Equally important, teachers use this focus on narrative to establish a strong, targeted feedback cycle and to create a vibrant classroom community of readers and writers where diverse experiences and perspectives are at the center of instruction. Students then apply their new observational skills to lively readings from Roald Dahl's memoir *Boy: Tales of Childhood* and learn how to work closely with textual evidence.

Roald Dahl's 1984 memoir describes a childhood filled with contrasts of love and cruelty, mischief and suffering, humor and anguish. All the sensitivity, bravado, and drama of childhood are present, conveyed in the adult Dahl's compact, powerful prose, brimming with sensory detail. Lessons target Dahl's ability to describe a complexity of emotions over the arc of one's experiences and emphasize Dahl's use of language and structure to convey his central ideas. At the end of the unit, students write an essay arguing whether the boys or the adults cause more trouble in the book.



1090L
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QL: 2
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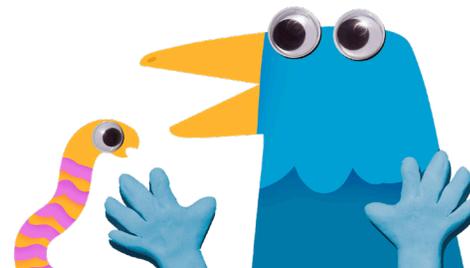
RT: 2
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Rationale(s) for QL

- The subject matter relies on little discipline knowledge and/or is fully explained
- Language includes some complex words or usage and/or sentence complexity

Rationale(s) for RT

- Tasks and activities may contain some complexity, balanced with engaging topics.



Sub-units and # of lessons

Core lessons

- SU1: Welcome! (1 lesson)
- SU2: Get Started (10 lessons)
- SU3: *Boy: Tales of Childhood* by Roald Dahl (12 lessons)

Summative assessments

- SU4: Write an Essay: Argumentative (4 lessons)
- Dahl & Narrative Unit Reading Assessment

Essay prompt

Who does Dahl describe as causing more trouble: the boys or the adults? Use details from one moment in the book to show who is really causing more trouble.

Vocabulary module

Context Clues

Focus Standards

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|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.1 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3.B |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.2 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3.D |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.3 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.4 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.4 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.5 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.5 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.6 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.6 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.1.B |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.1.C |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1.A | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.2 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1.B | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.2.B |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1.C | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.3 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1.D | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.4.C |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.4.D |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3 | |

Texts in the unit

Core text

- *Boy: Tales of Childhood* by Roald Dahl I/LN, 1090L

Extra texts

- Excerpt from *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain
- Excerpt from *Tony Hawk: Professional Skateboarder* by Tony Hawk and Sean Mortimer I/LN
- Excerpt from *The Story of My Life* by Helen Keller I/H
- Excerpt from *The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett L/S
- Excerpts from *Inside Out & Back Again* by Thanhha Lai L/S



6B: Mysteries & Investigations



Unit summary

Students read like an investigator to embark on a multi-genre study into the mesmerizing world of scientific and investigative sleuthing. *The Secret of the Yellow Death: A True Story of Medical Sleuthing* by Suzanne Jurmain and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories take place in the late 19th century, when medical diagnostics and criminal investigations were still evolving into scientific fields.

The lessons based on *The Secret of the Yellow Death* challenge students to grapple with clues, evidence, and scientific data to make meaning and support their own claims as Dr. Walter Reed and his team of scientific investigators collaborate with their Cuban counterparts to seek the truth about yellow fever. Students explore the ethics of the team's experiments and consider how current scientists and health workers approach issues of public health. Students' work with tracing the evidence in *The Secret of the Yellow Death* helps them as they move on to closely read two Sherlock Holmes stories, breaking down observations of a crime scene to understand how the detective breaks seemingly unsolvable mysteries wide open. At the end of the unit, students write an essay explaining which trait is most useful to problem-solving investigators.



QT: 750L-1170L



QL: 3



RT: 3



Rationale(s) for QL

- Language includes some complex words or usage and/or sentence complexity
- The subject matter requires some discipline-specific knowledge but references are largely explained

Rationale(s) for RT

- Tasks and activities may contain some complexity, balanced with engaging topics; activities often require inferencing; students benefit from the knowledge they have built throughout the unit.



Sub-units and # of lessons

Core lessons

- SU1: Fever (1 lesson)
- SU2: *The Secret of the Yellow Death: A True Story of Medical Sleuthing* by Suzanne Jurmain (15 lessons)
- SU3: “The Speckled Band” by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (6 lessons)
- SU4: “The Red-Headed League” by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (4 lessons)

Summative assessments

- SU5: Write an Essay: Informative (5 lessons)
- Mysteries & Investigations Unit Reading Assessment

Essay prompt

People—like scientists, detectives, and health workers—take many approaches to solving problems. They may take bold and brave action, work methodically, think carefully and logically, collaborate with others, or try new approaches.

Based on the texts you have read, what stands out to you as one important characteristic to have as a problem solver or investigator?

Include two examples of individuals demonstrating this characteristic in your response.

Vocabulary module

Connotations and Denotations

Focus Standards

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| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.1 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2.B |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.3 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2.C |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.5 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2.D |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.2 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2.E |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.3 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2.F |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.5 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.6 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.4 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.7 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.5 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.8 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.6 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.9 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.9.B |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.1 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.2.B |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2.A | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.3.B |

Texts in the unit

Core texts

- *The Secret of the Yellow Death: A True Story of Medical Sleuthing* by Suzanne Jurmain I/H, 1010L
- *Fever 1793* by Laurie Halse Anderson L/S, 750L
- Letter from Mabel H. Lazear to Dr. James Carroll I/H, 1160L
- “Yellow Fever Circles Brazil’s Huge Cities” by Shasta Darlington and Donald G. McNeil Jr. from *The New York Times* I/H, 1170L
- The Hippocratic Oath I/S&T, 990L
- “The Speckled Band” by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle L/S, 1090L
- “The Red-Headed League” by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle L/S, 1070L

Extra texts

- “See It Through” by Edgar Guest L/P
- Excerpt from “Outwitting Nature’s Greatest Killer” by Mark Johnson, Mark Hoffman, & Devi Shastri I/S&T
- Excerpt from “Young Goodman Brown” by Nathaniel Hawthorne L/S
- Excerpt from “A Mysterious Visit” by Mark Twain L/S



6C: The Chocolate Collection



Unit summary

In this Collection, students explore primary documents and conduct independent research to understand the diverse roles that chocolate has played in cultures around the world. These primary and secondary articles, artifacts, and images cover the 3,700-year history of chocolate and take students on an odyssey from ancient times in Mexico (including the Olmec, Mayan, and Aztec people and their cultures) through to current issues in chocolate production (including the movement for better labor practices and reduced habitat destruction). Students build information literacy skills, learn how to craft and answer a research question, and collaborate to draft procedures for and conduct a Socratic seminar. They learn how to construct an evidence-based argument, and use those skills to write a short piece aimed at convincing readers that their favorite kind of chocolate is the best, debate whether or not chocolate should be included in school lunches, and draft a persuasive letter to a local candy store owner.

Throughout these activities, students learn to develop their positions by identifying and researching primary and secondary source documents and constructing explanations and arguments on solid, relevant evidence and information. As students reach the end of the unit, they synthesize all of the skills they've developed to tackle a culminating research project—part essay, part interactive timeline.



QT: 860L–1540L



QL: 4



RT: 4



Rationale(s) for QL

- Texts include multiple or intricate purposes
- Language includes some complex words or usage and/or sentence complexity
- The subject matter requires knowledge of discipline or of other texts

Rationale(s) for RT

- Tasks and activities contain nuance and complexity and require students to be persistent, make high level inferences, and benefit from the knowledge they have built throughout the unit.

Sub-units and # of lessons

Core lessons

- SU1: Information Literacy (4 lessons)
- SU2: Scavenger Hunt and Internet Research (4 lessons)
- SU3: Argumentative Writing and Collection Research (4 lessons)
- SU4: Debate and Internet Research (4 lessons)

Summative assessments

- SU5: Write an Essay: Research-based Informative or Argumentative (6 lessons); Multimedia Project (2 lessons)
- The Chocolate Collection Unit Reading Assessment

Essay prompt

Research Option 1: Chocolate and Slavery

When did slavery become a part of chocolate production? Is slavery still used on cacao plantations today? Write an informative essay about the history of slavery in the production of chocolate.

Research Option 2: Chocolate = Happiness...or Does It?

Can eating chocolate affect your mood? Your brain chemistry? Is it addictive? Study the scientific research on chocolate and determine what experts have found. Research the texts in the Collection and on the Internet to find the information you need. Be ready to make a claim and cite sources.

Vocabulary module

Greek and Latin Roots

Focus Standards

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.7
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.1
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.8
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1.A
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1.B
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1.D
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1.E
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2.A
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2.B
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2.E
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2.F
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.4
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.5
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.6
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.7
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.8
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.9
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.1.D
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.3
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.5
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.6
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.2
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.2.B
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.3

Texts in the unit

Core texts

- “Prehistoric Americans Traded Chocolate for Turquoise?” by Christine Dell’Amor from *National Geographic News* I/H, 1360L
- Letter from Lord Rothschild to Laurence Fish I/H, 1120L
- “Pilot Dropped Candy into Hearts of Berlin” by *ABC News* I/H, 1040L
- Appendix C Statement from *Labour in Portuguese West Africa* by William A. Cadbury I/H, original version: 1650L, adapted version: 1410L, paraphrased version: 1050L
- “Is It Fair to Eat Chocolate?” from *Skippping Stones* by Deborah Dunn I/LN, 1020L
- “Eat More Chocolate, Win More Nobels?” by Karl Ritter and Marilyn Marchione from *Associated Press* I/S&T, 1310L
- “Can Chocolate Be Good for My Health?” by Katherine Zeratsky, R.D., L.D. I/S&T, 1110L
- “Dark Chocolate: A Bittersweet Pill to Take” by Mary Brophy Marcus from *USA Today* I/H, 1540L
- “Chocolate” from *American Smooth* by Rita Dove L/P, Lexile n/a,
- Act I, Scene Eight from *Così fan tutte: English National Opera Guide* 22 L/D, Lexile n/a,
- *Chocolat* by Joanne Harris L/S, 860L
- *The Dharma Bums* by Jack Kerouac L/S, 970L
- “The Sweet Lure of Chocolate” by Jim Spadaccini I/H, 970L
- “The Tropics” from *The Story of Chocolate* by National Confectioners Association’s Chocolate Council I/S&T, 1110L
- “Good Harvest” by Karen E. Lange from *All Animals* magazine/The Humane Society of the United States I/H, 1190L

Extra texts

- Excerpt from *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin* by Benjamin Franklin I/H
- Excerpt from *Life on the Mississippi* by Mark Twain I/H
- Excerpt from *A History of US 10: All the People Since 1945* by Joy Hakim I/H



6D: The Greeks



Unit summary

Students closely explore and analyze three stories from Greek mythology: Prometheus, Odysseus, and Arachne. Drawing on the routines and skills established in previous units, these lessons ask students to move from considering the state of a single person—themselves or a character—to contemplating broader questions concerning the role people play in the world and the various communities they inhabit. Independent reading assignments provide students the opportunity to explore additional Greek, Roman, and Middle Eastern myths.

“Prometheus” is an excerpt from Bernard Evslin’s book *Heroes, Gods and Monsters of the Greek Myths*. This myth raises a number of engaging questions about justice, responsibility, and what it means to be human. Homer’s epic poem *The Odyssey* recounts the story of Odysseus as he makes his journey home from the Trojan War. These lessons challenge students to consider how character traits can be both beneficial and harmful, and what constitutes leadership. “Arachne,” a poem by Ted Hughes, offers a retelling of Ovid’s original tale of the weaver Arachne asserting herself in front of the more powerful Minerva. In this sub-unit, students confront the question of how humans should conduct themselves and the line between pride and arrogance. Each of these myths shows characters debating big questions about human nature, and students examine various perspectives. Students also have the opportunity to write variations of two of these myths, showcasing their own perspectives on the themes of honor and justice. At the end of the unit, students write an essay arguing whether characters from two of the myths are destroyed by their pride.



QT: 870L–1270L



QL: 4



RT: 3



Rationale(s) for QL

- Levels of meaning and theme are multiple, ambiguous, and/or revealed over the course of the text
- Language includes some complex words or usage and/or sentence complexity

Rationale(s) for RT

Tasks and activities may contain some complexity, balanced with engaging topics; activities often require inferencing; students benefit from the knowledge they have built throughout the unit.



Sub-units and # of lessons

Core lessons

- SU1: Prometheus (6 lessons)
- SU2: Odysseus (7 lessons)
- SU3: Arachne (6 lessons)

Summative assessments

- SU4: Write an Essay: Argumentative (5 lessons)
- The Greeks Unit Reading Assessment

Quest

- *Myth World*

Essay prompt

Using two of the following characters—the humans from “Prometheus,” Odysseus from *The Odyssey*, or Arachne from “Arachne”—answer the following question: Are humans destroyed by their pride? Why or why not? Use your answer to stake a claim about whether or not these characters have been destroyed by their pride. Be sure to support your claim with textual evidence.

Vocabulary module

Synonyms and Antonyms

Focus Standards

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|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.1 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1.D |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.2 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1.E |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.3 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.5 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.5 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.6 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.6 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.9 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.9 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.9.A |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1.A | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.1.D |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1.B | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.4 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1.C | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.2 |

Texts in the unit

Core texts

- “Prometheus” from *Heroes, Gods and Monsters of the Greek Myths* by Bernard Evslin L/S, 870L
- “Daedalus” from *Heroes, Gods and Monsters of the Greek Myths* by Bernard Evslin L/S, 870L
- “Demeter” from *Heroes, Gods and Monsters of the Greek Myths* by Bernard Evslin L/S, 870L
- *The Odyssey* by Homer, translated by E.V. Rieu L/S, 1140L
- “Arachne” from *Selected Tales from Ovid* by Ted Hughes L/S, Lexile n/a
- *The Arabian Nights' Entertainments*, “Second Voyage,” by Andrew Lang L/S, 1270L

Extra texts

- Excerpt from *Prometheus Bound* by Aeschylus L/S
- Excerpt from *A Wonder Book and Tanglewood Tales for Girls and Boys*, “Circe’s Palace,” by Nathaniel Hawthorne, L/S
- Excerpt from “The Picture Minerva Wove” by Carolyn Sherwin Bailey L/S



6E: Summer of the Mariposas



Unit summary

Students read *Summer of the Mariposas* by Guadalupe Garcia McCall, a novel that follows the journey of the Garza sisters into Mexico and back. Students dive into this retelling of *The Odyssey* through a contemporary Latinx lens as they explore sibling and extended-family relationships. Instead of the traditional portrait of an independent male hero, students follow five fully drawn sisters as they work together to take their version of the traditional hero's journey, fighting their own battles, having adventures, and navigating relationships as they journey to find themselves, each other, and their family. Using the hero's journey structure and Homer's *Odyssey* as inspiration, McCall creates a world in which Mexican folklore and Aztec legends are woven into the more realistic experiences of Odilia and her sisters.

Over the course of the unit, students consider how characters change and develop, compare McCall's retelling to episodes from Homer's *Odyssey*, contrast the sisters' fictional journey to the nonfiction account of a migrant boy's journey, and create a map of this hero's journey. Students also research Aztec mythology to create their Aztec *lotería* card for the classroom gallery, explore the symbolism of the *mariposa*, and participate in fishbowl discussions to collaboratively discuss a central theme of the meaning of family. After completing the novel, students write an essay explaining what allows one of the heroes of *Summer of the Mariposas* to be successful in specific moments.



QT: 840L–1140L



QL: 3



RT: 4



Rationale(s) for QL

- Levels of meanings and/or theme may be conveyed with some subtlety.
- The subject matter requires some literary/cultural knowledge but references are largely explained

Rationale(s) for RT

Tasks and activities contain nuance and complexity, balanced with engaging topics; activities often require inferencing; students benefit from the knowledge they have built throughout the unit.

Sub-units and # of lessons

Core lessons

- SU1: *Summer of the Mariposas* by Guadalupe Garcia McCall (20 lessons)

Summative assessments

- SU2: Write an Essay: Informative (5 lessons)
- Summer of the Mariposas Unit Reading Assessment

Essay prompt

What is a special characteristic or source of strength for one of the Garza sisters? How does this characteristic or strength help her succeed in any two moments of her hero's journey?

Vocabulary module

Figurative Language

Focus Standards

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|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.1 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2.C |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.2 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2.D |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.3 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2.E |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.4 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2.F |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.5 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.4 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.6 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.5 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.7 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.6 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.9 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.8 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.9 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.9.A |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.1.A |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.1.D |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2.A | |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2.B | |

Texts in the unit

Core texts

- *Summer of the Mariposas* by Guadalupe Garcia McCall L/S, 840L
- *The Odyssey*, a graphic novel by Gareth Hinds L/S, 940L
- *The Odyssey* by Homer, translated by E.V. Rieu L/S, 1140L
- *Enrique's Journey* by Sonia Nazario I/LN, 860L

Extra texts

- Excerpt from "The Boy and the Bayonet" by Paul Laurence Dunbar L/S
- Excerpt from *A Wonder Book and Tanglewood Tales for Girls and Boys* by Nathaniel Hawthorne, "The Minotaur" L/S
- "Mariposa" by Edna St. Vincent Millay L/S



6F: The *Titanic* Collection



Unit summary

In this Collection, students explore documents and conduct independent research to better understand what really happened on the fateful night in 1912 when the *Titanic* sank in the North Atlantic Ocean. Students build information literacy skills and learn what information can be gleaned from research artifacts like menus from the *Titanic*'s first-, second-, and third-class dining rooms; photos and drawings of the ship; transcripts of the final telegraph communications; and newspaper accounts of the sinking and its aftermath. They are each assigned a passenger from the *Titanic*'s manifest and consider gender and class issues as they research and write narrative accounts from the point of view of their passenger. They also participate in a Socratic seminar in which they rely on their research to examine the complicated issues inherent in the *Titanic* story.

Throughout these activities, students learn to tell the difference between primary, secondary, and tertiary sources; determine if a source is reliable; and understand the ethical uses of information. As students reach the end of the unit, they synthesize all of the skills they've developed to tackle a culminating research assignment—part essay, part multimedia project.



QT: 800L-1620L



QL: 4



RT: 4



Rationale(s) for QL

- Text structure is generally straightforward and contains features essential to comprehension
- The subject matter requires knowledge of discipline or of other texts

Rationale(s) for RT

Tasks and activities contain nuance and complexity and require students to be persistent, make high level inferences, and benefit from the knowledge they have built throughout the unit.

Sub-units and # of lessons

Core lessons

- SU1: Information Literacy (4 lessons)
- SU2: Scavenger Hunt and Internet Research (4 lessons)
- SU3: Passport and Collection Research (4 lessons)
- SU4: Socratic Seminar and Internet Research (4 lessons)

Summative assessments

- SU5: Write an Essay: Research-based Informative or Argumentative (6 lessons); Multimedia Project (2 lessons)
- The *Titanic* Collection Unit Reading Assessment

Essay prompt

Research Option 1: Who's to blame for the loss of life on the *Titanic*?

Research a list of several parties involved in the tragedy. Some options include the *Titanic*'s Captain Smith, the telegraph officers, the *Titanic*'s lookouts, the captain of the *Carpathia*, and the White Star Line's owners and shipbuilders.

Research Option 2: Who were the *Titanic* orphans?

Write an informative essay detailing the experience of the two young children known as the *Titanic* Orphans.

Vocabulary module

Prefixes and Suffixes

Focus Standards

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|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.1 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.5 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.7 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.6 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.9 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.7 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.8 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1.A | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.9 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.1.B | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.1 |
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| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2.A | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.6 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2.B | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.2 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2.E | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.2.B |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.2.F | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.3.B |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3.A | |

Texts in the unit

Core texts

- Introduction from *Sinking of the "Titanic" Most Appalling Ocean Horror* by Jay Henry Mowbray, Ph.D., LL.D I/H, original version: 1500L, adapted version: 1200L, paraphrased version: 1000L
- A Letter from Mary Lines I/H, 800L
- "Testimony of Olaus Abelseth" from United States Senate Inquiry I/H
- Chapter 7—"There Is Your Beautiful Nightdress Gone" from *A Night to Remember* by Walter Lord I/H, 1120L
- Various public domain sources: Final Wireless Transmissions Aboard the RMS *Titanic* I/H
- Chapter 6—"Women and Children First!" from *Sinking of the Titanic and Great Sea Disasters* by Logan Marshall (I/H, original version: 1330L, adapted version: 1270L, paraphrased version: 960L
- Untitled Poem read at the *Titanic* Memorial Dedication in Belfast, Ireland—June 1920, anonymous L/P
- "MAY BE WAIFS' MOTHER. Mme. Navratil of Nice Believes Babies Saved from *Titanic* Are Hers." from *The New York Times* I/H, 1170L
- "Discovery of the *Titanic*" by *Lapham's Quarterly* editors I/H, 1170L
- "Rusticles on *Titanic* Contain New Iron-Eating Bacteria, Study Says" by Jack Phillips from *Epoch Times* I/S&T, 1350L
- "The Iceberg Was Only Part of It" by William J. Broad from *The New York Times* I/H, 1260L
- Letter from the Dock, Wharf, Riverside and General Workers' Union of Great Britain and Ireland I/H, 1620L

Extra texts

- "The Harvest Of The Sea (On the sinking of the 'Titanic')" by Charles Hanson Towne L/P
- Excerpt from the British Government report submitted to US Senate on April 15, 1912: "The Third-Class Passengers" I/H



Grade 6 Poetry in America



Amplify partnered with Poetry in America, whose mission is to bring poetry into classrooms and living rooms around the world, to design lessons that combine PIA’s “Four Pillar” approach with Amplify’s close reading pedagogy to build students’ engagement and knowledge about poetry. Each three-lesson sub-unit allows students to fully explore a poet’s choices around form and language, both in conversation with each other and with the poets, celebrities, academics, and citizens who appear in embedded videos discussing each poem. Students have the opportunity to try on the poet’s use of language, craft, and structure in creative writing assignments tailored to the targeted poem.

In Sub-unit 1, students work with Richard Blanco’s evocative poem, “Looking for The Gulf Motel,” which recalls a childhood vacation with his Cuban immigrant family. Students use Blanco’s discussion of the “mirror effect” to analyze his rich imagery, and end the sub-unit by taking a turn at composing their own “Gulf Motel” poems.

In Sub-unit 2, Coleman Barks’s poem “Glad” playfully juxtaposes a young girl’s heroics on the soccer field with the imagery and diction of an epic, allowing students to consider how Barks’s use of language and the sonnet form helps them understand the poem’s commentary on the emphasis on winners and losers in modern sports.

In Sub-unit 3, students consider the personal and cultural background that African American poet Richard Hayden drew on for his iconic poem “Those Winter Sundays,” and how those influences are reflected in his language and his adaptation of the sonnet form for this poem about his father. They use his poem as an inspiration for writing their own ode to an unsung hero in their life. (This sub-unit is made available across grades 6–8.)



Rationale(s) for QL

- Level meanings and/or theme may be conveyed with some subtlety
- The subject matter requires some literary/cultural knowledge but references are largely explained

Rationale(s) for RT

Tasks and activities may contain some complexity, balanced with engaging topics; activities do not require substantial external knowledge or experience.

Poetry in America activity highlights:

Discussions with annotated guides

Explore each poet's use of sensory details, figurative language, form, and structure.

Video explorations

Watch and discuss videos where poets, celebrities, and academics share their interpretations and analyses of each poem.

Creative responses

Compose poems by experimenting with theme and mimicking each poet's style.

Core texts

- "Looking for The Gulf Motel" by Richard Blanco, L/P
- "Glad" by Coleman Barks, L/P
- "Those Winter Sundays" by Robert Hayden, L/P

Core lessons

- SU1: "Looking for the Gulf Motel" (3 lessons)
- SU2: "Glad" (3 lessons)
- SU3: "Those Winter Sundays" (3 lessons)

Focus Standards

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.1 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3.D |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.2 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.4 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.3 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.6 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.4 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.1 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.5 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.1.C |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.6 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.2 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.7 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.6 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.9 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.3 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.10 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.5 |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3 | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.5.A |
| • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3.B | • CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.5.C |



Amplify Grammar



The Amplify digital Grammar unit enables teachers to assign students self-guided grammar instruction and practice. Sub-units are paired by topic: one covers foundational material on the topic and one contains more advanced and “stretch” material. Middle grade teachers and students share access to the full range of topics and lessons within the Grammar unit, so teachers select the content that best meets their students’ needs while exposing students to key grammar topics for the middle grades. Teachers integrate this instruction into their core instructional pathway using the Amplify Flex Days within the core units. To introduce or review topics with students, teachers use the related lessons or drills on the topic found in Amplify’s *Mastering Conventions* PDFs, also available within this unit.

Core lessons

- Sub-unit 1: What Is a Complete Sentence? (8 Lessons)
- Sub-unit 2: Expanding the Complete Sentence (8 Lessons)
- Sub-unit 3: Understanding the Pronoun (5 Lessons)
- Sub-unit 4: Pronoun Usage: Agreement and Reference (5 Lessons)
- Sub-unit 5: Verb Tense (4 Lessons)
- Sub-unit 6: Verb Moods, Modals, and Voice (4 Lessons)
- Sub-unit 7: Punctuation (2 Lessons)

Printable instructional resources

- *Mastering Conventions One: Grammar and Punctuation*
- *Mastering Conventions Two: Grammar and Punctuation*
- *Mastering Conventions Three: Grammar and Punctuation*
- *Mastering Conventions Four: Spelling*

Standards

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.1.A
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.1.B
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.1.C
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.1.D
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.1.E
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.2
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.2.A
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.3.A
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.3.B

Grade 6 Beginning Story Writing

Unit summary

In this unit, students get to practice their creative writing skills, learning the elements of storytelling and character development and the importance of vivid language. Students gain a sense of ownership over their writing as they experiment with the impact of their authorial choices on sentences, language, character traits, and plot twist. As students consider how to use these elements to create a story, they also gain tools to help them effectively and incisively analyze a piece of literature.

Students begin with creating a character, observing and recording details, and writing about their characters in mundane situations to make them nuanced and believable. This situational setting allows students to create a secondary character for their own story and develop dialogue. After some explicit instruction about the structure of a story, students pull all their skills together to write a story and practice the most important part of creative writing—revision.

Core lessons

- Sub-unit 1: Creating a Believable Character (9 Lessons)
- Sub-unit 2: Experimenting With a Second Character (10 Lessons)
- Sub-unit 3: Writing a Short Story (5 Lessons)
- Sub-unit 7: Punctuation (2 Lessons)

Standards

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3.A
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3.B
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3.C
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3.D
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3.E
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.4
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.5
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.6
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.1.B
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6.1.C
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.1.E
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.2
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.3.A
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.3.B

Novel Guides

Amplify ELA Novel Guides provide middle school teachers with flexible study guides for the books they most want to teach and provide students with lean, targeted instruction that follows the pedagogy in core units. The diverse selection of books in this series presents a range of genres and themes, from mystery to non-fiction and from social justice to identity and courage.

The Novel Guides—housed in the Amplify Library—are designed to be used flexibly and offer suggestions for implementation. Here are two titles that align to the grade 6 topics and skills:

6A: *Brown Girl Dreaming* by Jacqueline Woodson

As your students practice using observational details to focus and develop one narrative moment, this poetic memory offers a model of how small details convey both experience and emotion.

6E: *Inside Out & Back Again* by Thanhha Lai

As students complete *Summer of the Mariposas*, this memoir of another family's journey offers an opportunity for further discussions about family and heroic journeys.