**Grade 6
English Language Arts
Unit 2: Fiction: Realistic Fiction**

Time Frame: Approximately five weeks

Unit Description

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

Student Understandings

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

Guiding Questions

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

Unit 2 Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs) and Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

GLE#	GLE Text and Benchmarks
**Grade-Level Expectations**
01a.	Identify word meanings using a variety of strategies, including using context clues (e.g., definition, restatement, example, contrast) (ELA-1-M1)
01b.	Identify word meanings using a variety of strategies, including using structural analysis (e.g., roots, affixes) (ELA-1-M1)
01c.	Identify word meanings using a variety of strategies, including determining word origins (etymology) (ELA-1-M1)
01d.	Identify word meanings using a variety of strategies, including using knowledge of idioms (ELA-1-M1)
02.	Identify common abbreviations, symbols, acronyms, and multiple meaning words (ELA-1-M1)
03.	Develop specific vocabulary (e.g., scientific, contentspecific, current events) for various purposes (ELA1M1)
04a.	Identify and explain story elements, including theme development (ELA-1-M2)
04b.	Identify and explain story elements, including character development (ELA-1-M2)
04d.	Identify and explain story elements, including plot sequence (e.g., exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution) (ELA-1-M2)
05a.	Identify and explain literary and sound devices, including foreshadowing (ELA-1-M2)
05b.	Identify and explain literary and sound devices, including flashback (ELA-1-M2)
09.	Compare and contrast elements (e.g., plot, setting, characters, theme) in a variety of genres (ELA-6-M2)
11a.	Demonstrate understanding of information in gradeappropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including sequencing events and steps in a process (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
11b.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including summarizing and paraphrasing information (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
11c.	Demonstrate understanding of information in gradeappropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including identifying stated or implied main ideas and supporting details (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
11d.	Demonstrate understanding of information in gradeappropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including comparing and contrasting literary elements and ideas (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
11e.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including making simple inferences and drawing conclusions (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
11f.	Demonstrate understanding of information in grade-appropriate texts using a variety of strategies, including predicting the outcome of a story or

**Grade-Level Expectations**
GLE#	**GLE Text and Benchmarks**
	situation (ELA-7-M1) (see ELA-1-M2)
14.	Analyze an author's stated or implied purpose for writing (e.g., to explain, to entertain, to persuade, to inform, to express personal attitudes or beliefs) (ELA7M3)
17a.	Write multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with an established central idea (ELA-2-M1)
17b.	Write multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with organizational patterns (e.g., comparison/contrast, order of importance, chronological order) appropriate to the topic (ELA-2-M1)
17c.	Write multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with elaboration (e.g., fact, examples, and/or specific details) (ELA-2-M1)
17d.	Write multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with transitional words and phrases that unify ideas and points (ELA-2-M1)
19b.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include vocabulary selected to clarify meaning, create images, and set a tone (ELA-2-M2)
19e.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics that include variety in sentence structure (ELA-2-M2)
20a.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as selecting topic and form (ELA-2-M3)
20b.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as prewriting (e.g., brainstorming, researching, raising questions, generating graphic organizers) (ELA-2-M3)
20c.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as drafting (ELA-3-M3)
20d.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as conferencing (ELA-2-M3)
20e.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as revising based on feedback and use of various tools (e.g., LEAP 21 Writer's Checklist, rubrics) (ELA-2-M3)
20f.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as proofreading/editing (ELA-2-M3)
20g.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as publishing using technology (ELA-2-M3)
21.	Develop grade-appropriate paragraphs and multiparagraph compositions using the various modes of writing (e.g., description, narration, exposition, persuasion), emphasizing narration and exposition (ELA-2-M4)
22b.	Use the various modes to write compositions, including essays based on a stated opinion (ELA-2-M4)
23.	Develop writing using a variety of literary devices, including foreshadowing, flashback, and imagery (ELA-2-M5)
25b.	Use standard English punctuation, including commas and coordinating

Grade-Level Expectations

GLE#	GLE Text and Benchmarks
	conjunctions to separate independent clauses in compound sentences (ELA-3-M2)
25c.	Use standard English Punctuation, including colons after salutation in business letters (ELA-3-M2)
26.	Capitalize names of companies, buildings, monuments, and geographical names (ELA3M2)
27a.	Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English punctuation, including possessive forms of singular and plural nouns and pronouns (ELA3M2)
27b.	Write paragraphs and compositions following standard English structure and usage, including regular and irregular verb tenses (ELA-3-M3)
28a.	Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including prepositional phrases (ELA-3-M4)
28c.	Apply knowledge of parts of speech in writing, including conjunctions and transitions to connect ideas (ELA-3-M4)
29.	Spell highfrequency, commonly confused, frequently misspelled words and derivatives (e.g., roots and affixes) correctly (ELA3M5)
35.	Adjust volume and inflection to suit the audience and purpose of presentations (ELA-4-M3)
36.	Organize oral presentations with a thesis, an introduction, a body developed with relevant details, and a conclusion (ELA-4-M3)

ELA CCSS

CCSS#	CCSS Text
Reading Standards for Literature	
RL.6.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone.
RL.6.5	Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.
RL.6.7	Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they "see" and "hear" when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.
RL.6.10	By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.
Reading Standards for Informational Text	
RI.6.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.

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

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

Language Standards	
L.6.4c, d	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. c. Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech. d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).
L.6.5b, c	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. b. Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words. c. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., *stingy, scrimping, economical, thrifty*).
L.6.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific word and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Sample Activities

Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year's grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades.

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

Ongoing activities should be a part of daily instruction.

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

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

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

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

Reading Response Learning Log		
Title of Text:		Genre:
Date	Pages Read:	Response:
9/12/06	p. 1-4	I think this story is going to be about the girl's struggle to keep up with her friends. I'm going to read to find out whether she is successful and to see how she handles her friends when things are tough.

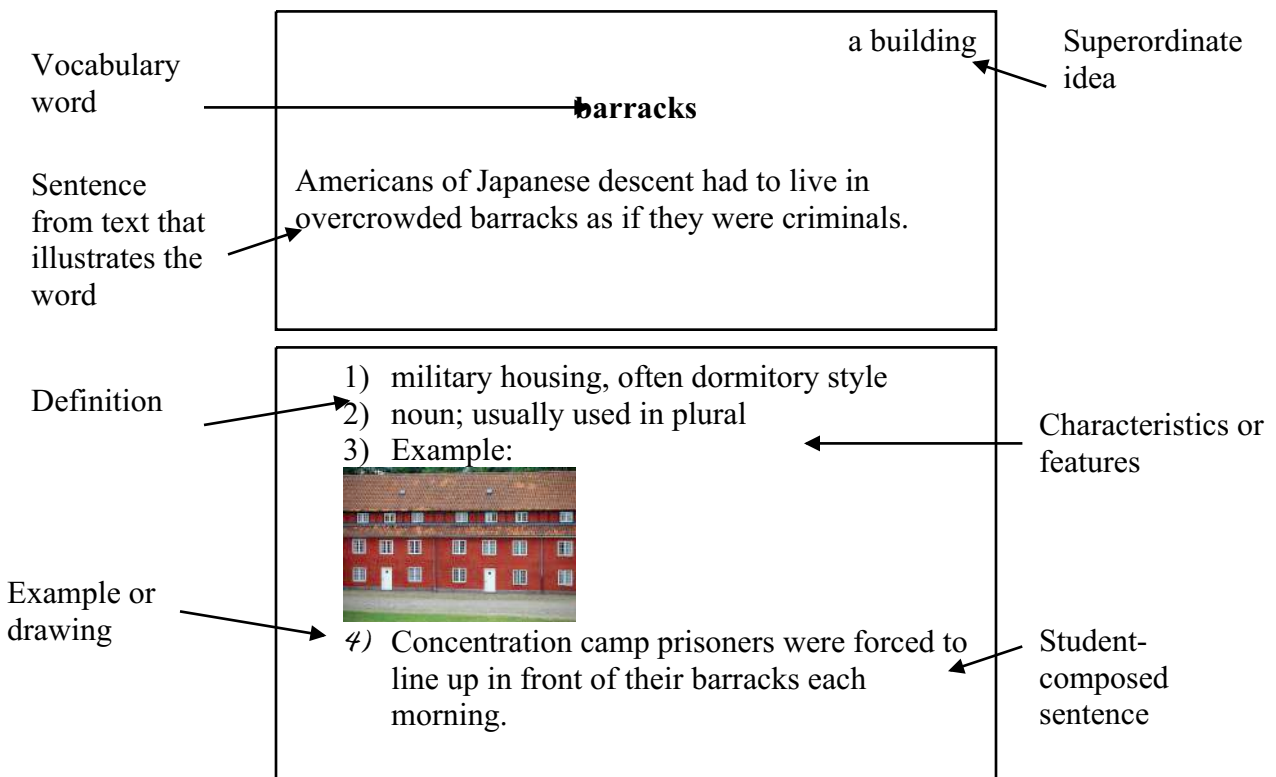| 9/13/06 | p. 5-8I | Her brother is mean; he reminds me of my brother sometimes and how he teases me so much. |
| 9/14/06 | p. 9-12 | Why can't parents ever leave their children alone? Mine fuss at me just like the girl's parents do. |

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

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

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

Vocabulary Card Example:
front of card

a building — Superordinate idea

Vocabulary word →

barracks

Sentence from text that illustrates the word → Americans of Japanese descent had to live in overcrowded barracks as if they were criminals.

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

← Characteristics or features

Example or drawing →
4) Concentration camp prisoners were forced to line up in front of their barracks each morning.

Student-composed sentence

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Words in Context BLM is a variation of the *learning log* (view literacy strategy descriptions) strategy. On the log, students keep track of unknown words, sentences from context, how they determined the meaning from the text (definition, restatement, example, or context), their own definition, and their understanding level. Because student

understandings will change over time, it is recommended that students complete this in pencil.

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

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

Example: Words in Context
Text: *Mockingbird*

date	word	sentence(s) from context, page	definition	restatement	example	Contrast	student-developed definition	understanding level + ? −
Sept. 29	caver-nous	"It's hard and stiff on the outside and cavernous on the inside. My Dictionary says CAVernous means filled with cavities or hollow areas." p. 2	x				large and hollow	?

Excerpt from *Mockingbird*; © Kathryn Erskine
Erskine, Kathryn. *Mockingbird.* New York: Philomel Books, 2010.

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

Materials List: Writing Piece with Target Skills Planner, BLANK BLM and Writing Piece with Target Skills, with Examples BLM, projection or presentation device (e.g.,

overhead and transparency pen, dry erase board and marker, document camera, SmartBoard, etc.)

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

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

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

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

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

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

a record of their writing over the course of the year serves as evidence of meeting this expectation.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Activity 7: Characteristics of Fiction and Realistic Fiction (GLEs: <u>04a</u>, 04b, 04d, <u>09</u>,

11b, **11f**; **CCSS: RL.6.10)**

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

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

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

Example: Vocabulary Self-Awareness Chart

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

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

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

Map BLM. Students will summarize the story to a partner, using a teacher-provided story map as a guide.

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

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

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

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

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

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

their roles. It is also crucial that students practice all four roles within the strategy, rather than sticking with one or two more comfortable roles. Steps are as follows:

1) Put students in groups of four. Distribute a note card to each member of the group, identifying each person's unique role for the current assignment.
   a. summarizer
   b. questioner
   c. clarifier
   d. predictor
2) Have students read a few paragraphs of the assigned text selection, using note-taking strategies such as selective underlining or sticky-notes to help them better prepare for their role in the upcoming discussion.
3) At the teacher-chosen stopping point, the *Summarizer* will highlight the key ideas up to this point in the reading.
4) The *Questioner* will then pose questions about the selection:
   a. unclear parts
   b. puzzling information
   c. connections to previously learned concepts
   d. motivations of actors or characters
5) The *Clarifier* addresses confusing parts and attempts to answer the questions that were just posed.
6) The P*redictor* offers guesses about what the author will tell the group next or what the next events in the story will be.
7) The roles in the group then switch one person to the right, and the next selection is read. Students repeat the process using their new roles. This continues until the entire selection is read.

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

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

Teacher Note: Useful websites for teaching the QAR strategy include:
http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/go/readquest/strat/qar.html *and*
http://www.kimskorner4teachertalk.com/readingliterature/readingstrategies/QAR.htm.

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

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

Materials List: notebook, *Split-Page Notetaking* BLM

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

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

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

Author's Emphasis on Character	
Who's who?	
From whose point of view is the story told?	
What problems/conflicts are seen?	
Author's Emphasis on Plot	

What is the primary conflict? What happens first? second? Etc.	
Author's Emphasis on Setting Where and when does the story take place? What details affect the plot?	
Which element is dominant in this story? Identify one passage that illustrates the dominance of this element.	

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

2013-2014
Activity 10: Comparing Texts—Listening v. Reading (CCSS: RL.6.7, RL.6.10)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Materials List: notebook, Story Map BLM

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

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

Students will then prewrite by choosing characters, a plot conflict, a setting, at least three important events, and a solution for their realistic story idea; they will record these ideas on the Story Map BLM, using chronological order.

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

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

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

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

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

Double-spacing in order to have room for revisions and proofreading corrections, authors will use computers or word processors, if available, along with their story maps and notes to create a draft of a narrative realistic story, introducing the characters, setting, and problems, and emphasizing chronological order with transitional words and variety in sentence structure in writing their drafts. The teacher will distribute the Dialogue with Speaker Tags and Stage Directions BLM, and will model its use. Students will revise their drafts to add dialogue with speaker tags and stage directions, highlighting these additions to make it easier for teacher and peer reviewers. The teacher will then distribute the Revelation of Character in Writing BLM and model its use next. Students will complete another revision to add revelation of character to their drafts, again highlighting

their additions for reviewers. After authors have completed their drafts, they will return to their groups and tell how they used their creativity and imagination to create their stories. They will also discuss the details they chose about character, setting, plot, theme, word choice, and variety of sentence structures to reinforce a realistic point of view.

Activity 13: Revise, Proofread, and Publish a Story (GLEs: 04b, <u>05a</u>, <u>05b</u>, <u>17c</u>, 20e, 20f, <u>20g</u>, <u>23</u>, 25b, 27a, 27b, 28a, 28c)

Materials List: writing notebook*,* completed Story Map BLM, Praise-Question-Polish Teacher Instructions BLM, Praise-Question-Polish [PQP] Feedback Form BLM, Revelation of Character in Writing Handout BLM, Secondary Editing-Proofreading Checklist BLM, Realistic Fiction Rubric BLM

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

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

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

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

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

Sample Assessments

General Guidelines

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

General Assessments

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

and anecdotal records to monitor individual student progress in reading strategies, group process, writing process and craft, and vocabulary acquisition.

Activity-Specific Assessments

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

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

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

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

- Activity 11: Students will each create and complete a story map that outlines their original realistic fiction story. See Activity 7. Students will participate in a fishbowl discussion to aid one another in story development.

- Activity 12: Student groups will draft, revise, and publish an original realistic fiction story. The criteria used for final assessment should include a story that:

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

- <u>Activity 13</u>: Students groups will proofread an original realistic fiction story, using a proofreading checklist for common errors in sentence construction, usage, capitalization, and punctuation. This should include attention to use of:
> ➢ commas, especially for separating independent clauses in compound sentences, for items in a series, and for interrupters
> ➢ coordinating conjunctions
> ➢ agreement of subjects and verbs and pronouns and their antecedents
> ➢ possessives vs. plurals
> ➢ verb tenses, regular and irregular
> ➢ conjunctions, transitions, and prepositional phrases to connect ideas
> ➢ commonly misspelled words

Realistic Fiction Short Stories: Grade 6 Recommendations

1.	Aiken, Joan.	"Lob's Girl"
2.	Avi.	"Scout's Honor"
3.	Block, Francesca Lia.	"Blue"
4.	Bruchac, Joseph.	"The Snapping Turtle"
5.	Cisneros, Sandra.	"Eleven"
6.	Clarke, Arthur C.	"Feathered Friend"
7.	Cooper, Susan.	"Muffin"
8.	Cormier, Robert.	"President Cleveland, Where are You?"
9.	Dygar, Thomas.	"Just Once"
10.	Fleischman, Paul.	"Interview with a Shrimp"
11.	Garcia, Rita Williams.	"Food from the Outside"
12.	Hesse, Karen.	"Waiting for Midnight"
13.	Howe, James.	"Everything Will be Okay"
14.	Jen, Gish.	"The White Umbrella"
15.	Jimenez, Francisco.	"The Circuit"
16.	Konigsburg, E. L.	"How I Lost my Station in Life"
17.	Lindbergh, Reeve.	"Flying"
18.	Lowry, Lois.	"Who's the New Kid?"
19.	Mazer, Norma Fox.	"In the Blink of an Eye"
		"Tuesday of the Other June"
20.	Mohr, Nicholasa.	"Taking a Dare"
21.	Mori, Kyoko.	"Learning to Swim"
22.	Myers, Walter Dean.	"Jeremiah's Song"
		"Reverend Abbott and Those Bloodshot Eyes"
23.	Namioka, Lensey.	"The All-American Slurp"
24.	Norman, Howard.	"Bus Problems"
25.	Osborne, Mary Pope.	"All-ball"
26.	Paterson, Katherine.	"Why I Never Ran Away from Home"
27.	Paulsen, Gary.	"Older Run"
28.	Rosen, Michael J.	"Pegasus for a Summer"
29.	Rylant, Cynthia.	"Stray"
30.	Sneve, Virginia Driving Hawk.	"Thunder Butte"
31.	Soto, Gary.	"La Bamba
		"The No-Guitar Blues"
32.	Viorst, Judith.	"The Southpaw"
33.	Yep, Laurence.	"The Great Rat Hunt"
34.	Yolen, Jane.	"Greyling"
		"The Long Closet"

Realistic Fiction Novels: Grade 6 Recommendations

1. Abbott, Tony.   *Firegirl*
2. Blume, Judy.   *Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret*
3. Bunting, Eve.   *The Homecoming*
                                         The Summer of Riley
4. Byars, Betsy.   *Summer of the Swans*
5. Christopher, Matt.   *Mountain Bike Mania*
6. Cleary, Beverly.   *Dear Mr. Henshaw*
7. Clements, Andrew.   *Frindle*
8. Creech, Sharon.   *Absolutely Normal Chaos*
                                         Walk Two Moons
9. Curtis, Christopher Paul.   *Bud, Not Buddy*
10. DiCamillo, Kate.   *Because of Winn Dixie*
11. Fleischman, Paul.   *Seedfolks*
12. Gantos, Jack.   *Joey Pigza Swallows the Key*
13. Holt, Kimberly Willis.   *My Louisiana Sky*
14. Horvath, Polly.   *Everything on a Waffle*
15. Hurwitz, Johanna.   *Baseball Fever*
16. Konigsburg, E.L.   *From the Mixed Up Files of Mrs. Basil E.Frankweiler*
                                         The View from Saturday
17. Lord, Cynthia.   *Rules*
18. Lowry, Lois.   *Anastasia Krupnik*
19. Naylor, Phyllis Reynolds.   *Shiloh Season*
20. Paulsen, Gary.   *Dogsong*
21. Sachar, Louis.   *Holes*
22. Soto, Gary.   *Crazy Weekend*
                                         Taking Sides
23. Spinelli, Jerry.   *Crash*
                                         Maniac Magee
24. Voigt, Cynthia.   *Bad Girls*
25. White, Ruth.   *Belle Prater's Boy*