

READINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

Sixth Grade Literacy Curriculum

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I. PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

The Readington School District middle school literacy program provides a balanced instructional approach which includes study of authentic and rich literature, and experience and practice in effective writing traits within a workshop approach. By the time our students are in eighth grade they are able to handle independently difficult texts. Students will focus on reading texts in the 6-8 grade band level (70 percent) independently as well as sustained practice with texts in the 9-10 grade band level as “stretch” texts (30 percent), which will require scaffolding by teachers. Students will read a wide variety of genres; narratives, dramas, poetry, and informational text. At this grade level students will read subgenres of adventure stories, biographies, memoirs, historical fiction, mysteries, folktales, legends, fables, tall tales, myths, fantasy, science fiction, realistic fiction, and graphic novels. Students will be exposed to dramas at this level that include one-act and multi-act plays both as text and as film. Poetry in form of narrative poems, lyrical poems, free verse, odes, ballads, and epics will be read. At this level, students will read expository as well as argument in the form of essays, opinion pieces as well as other documents and digital media sources on a range of topics.

In writers workshop students focus on specific text types: narrative, informative and explanatory text, and argument. In the study of vocabulary students focus both on understanding words and their nuances and on acquiring new words through conversation and reading and by being taught them directly. Students will grow to understand the proper meanings of words, with the means (context, word analysis, and so on) so that they can select words based on the situation. Our curriculum is designed to be responsive to the developmental stages. Our differentiated workshop approach allows students to be engaged with reading and writing experiences appropriate to their point in development, and our teachers assess students at regular intervals to inform their instructional decisions. Instruction focuses on assisting students to build independence as readers, writers, speakers, listeners, and language users. Students will build a base of knowledge across a wide range of subject matter by engaging with words of quality and substance. They will respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline.

The sixth grade language arts curriculum is designed to continue student development in reading and writing through direct instruction, guided practice, and independent practice. Readers workshop units of study include independent reading development, making sense of texts, using accountable talk to further synthesize texts, thinking and writing about reading in partnerships, and reading fiction and informational texts. During units of study students are encouraged to choose from a wide variety of young adult literature available to them in classroom libraries, the school media center, and texts that are tied directly to unit instruction. Students are taught how to make good choices for reading, how to respond in writing to their reading, and how to establish a purpose for reading, how to be a reflective reader and how to employ strategies to determine word meanings in context. Students are taught explicit strategies for comprehending text. Such strategies include retelling, summarizing, scanning, rereading, varying rate, making textual connections, and determining theme. Students learn to cite contextual evidence to back up theories and opinions they may have formed while reading a text. Students explore issues in book clubs and literature circles, as well as through shared and close reading.

Writers workshop units of study further students understanding of the structure of the essay, writing craft, poetry, narrative, information, and argument writing. A centerpiece in the writers workshop units of study is the students’ writers notebooks, which students employ as a tool for exploring writing ideas, jotting down observations, attempting a variety of writing techniques, flash-drafting, and experimenting with different writing forms. Throughout the units of study students focus their attention on the elements of style and punctuation. Students synthesize, organize, and reflect on and respond to all that they see in their world and learn about by reading books. They write not only narratives, but also arguments and informational texts. Students will not only record information and ideas, but also synthesize, analyze, compare, and contrast information and ideas.

Vocabulary instruction is woven into each of the units of study. Students in grade 6 participate in a spelling and vocabulary exploration program developed by the Kathy Ganske, the author of *Word Journeys*. Students engage in word study activities that are challenging, interactive, and inquiry based. The vocabulary/word study program in 6th grade is a continuation of the K-5 elementary word study program.

II. COMPONENTS OF BALANCED LITERACY

The components of a successful balanced literacy program in the middle school setting include the following:

- Reading Workshop
- Writing Workshop
- Word Study/Vocabulary Instruction

Reading Workshop: (Approximately 40 minutes daily)

The reading workshop is one component of a balanced literacy program. The reading workshop is comprised of four parts; the mini-lesson, independent reading time with conferring, a mid-workshop teaching point, and finally a teaching share, partnership*, or book club* discussions.

Mini-Lesson- The mini lesson takes place at the beginning of the reading workshop and should last about 10 minutes (no longer than 15). Students should be gathered at a central location (like a carpet) for the mini-lesson. During this time, the teacher clearly states the teaching point for that lesson. The teacher then models the skill or strategy they are teaching and involves the students in thinking with them as the teacher demonstrates exactly what they want students to learn to do as readers. Students then have an opportunity to practice the skill or strategy during the mini-lesson, while receiving support. Later, readers will draw on this strategy independently, as needed. Finally, the students are given a chance to practice the skill or strategy while still gathered together.

Student Independent Reading Time with Conferring and Small Group Work- In most forty-five minute reading workshops, teachers divide the work time between private time, when students read quietly to themselves, (20 min.) and partner time, when students meet to talk with their reading partners (5-10 min.) or book clubs (5-10 min.). After the mini-lesson students read self-selected just-right books that match the specified unit of study being studied. Students read privately and quietly while the teacher moves around the classroom, conferring with individuals, or meeting with partnerships or clubs. The teacher might also be leading a strategy small group reading lessons during this time.

Mid-Workshop Teaching Point- Many times as teachers are conferring with students, they notice that there is either a common difficulty students are having or that most students seem to grasp the concept and are ready to move on. Thus, the mid-workshop teaching point can be used either to clarify confusion, or to expand upon a strategy to push students to go further in their reading. It can also allow us to correct misconceptions, to remind students of a previous day's lesson that has special relevance, to instruct students about their upcoming partner work, or to rally readers to work harder or longer. The mid-workshop teaching point is most often decided during the workshop and comes as a result of teacher observation. This should take no more than few minutes, during which students generally stay in their reading spots rather than reconvene in the meeting area.

Teaching Share/Partnerships/Book Clubs- At the end of a workshop, after reading time, the teacher takes a couple minutes to wrap up the day's work with a teaching share. Many times the point a teacher makes in the share comes from specific student work from that days' workshop. It's used to share ways in which students have incorporated that day's mini-lesson into their work and to share their new insights or discoveries. The teacher sometime retells a conference or asks a student to share his or her reading work. The share should last no more than a few minutes. This is also the time where students can meet in their partnerships or book clubs to discuss the reading work they have been doing (anywhere from 5-15 minutes).

Small Group Instruction- Small group reading instruction fits into the reading workshop curriculum framework. Often as students read, teachers confer with a couple of readers and they meet with a small group. In some classrooms, however, teachers have a separate time blocked for additional work with small groups of readers.

It's important that small group work not substitute for reading workshop, but instead, offer additional opportunities for reading and instruction. One format for small group instruction in the middle school grades is in the form of book clubs.

Book Clubs- Book clubs in the middle school setting involve four or five readers who talk across a whole line of books. This structure allows a teacher to teach reading skills while small groups of students read, talk, and write about shared texts. Book clubs generally meet about two time a week to discuss a text they are reading in sync with one another, usually about 15-20 minutes at a time. Since the conversation relies heavily on students having read to the same point in their texts, students assign themselves several chapters a night. Book clubs provide teachers with another opportunity to push readers to read more. Usually there is an expectation that club members will prepare for conversations by doing some writing about the issue that is at the forefront of the conversation. Members of any one club need to be fairly well-matched by reading level. The group profits if the group members reflect diversity of gender and ethnicity.

Read Aloud- Read aloud in 6th grade consists of mentor texts that are selected by the teacher in order to demonstrate a reading strategy. Teachers schedule an "anchor experience" that is an interactive read aloud to introduce a series of lessons or work. This read-aloud time and book talk time is used to explicitly teach the skills of higher-level comprehension. This time is used to help students draw upon their full repertoire of reading strategies or to support a particular comprehension skill. Short texts often work well for these read alouds, or excerpts that are self-contained enough to illustrate and prompt for good reading and interpretation. During this time, students discuss their thoughts and ideas about the text, either as a group or in a partnership. These partnerships may be informal ("turn to your neighbor") or longer-lasting. When choosing read aloud texts, teacher aim to include a range of levels, genres, tones, and authors. Often the read aloud text is integral to many mini-lessons within a unit of study.

Interactive Read Aloud- Read aloud in 6th grade consists of mentor texts that are selected by the teacher in order to demonstrate a reading strategy. Teachers schedule an "anchor experience" that is an interactive read aloud to introduce a

series of lessons or work. Short texts often work well for these read alouds, or excerpts that are self-contained enough to illustrate and prompt for good reading and interpretation. During this time, students discuss their thoughts and ideas about the text, either as a group or in a partnership. These partnerships may be informal (“turn to your neighbor”) or longer-lasting. When choosing read aloud texts, teacher aim to include a range of levels, genres, tones, and authors. Often the read aloud text is integral to many mini-lessons within a unit of study. The interactive read-aloud lessons provide instruction for students in reading strategies; thinking about the text, questioning, content, text type, purpose, and genre characteristics are just a few.

Close Reading- Another method of read aloud is to do a close reading session. Students do not do close reading all the time, but rather when the teacher wants them to closely examine the specific strategies of a writer or to mull over and rethink what a text is saying to them as a reader. In 6th grade close readings are often done as a class on a poem, primary document, book, article, etc. that is central to the theme of a unit. Teachers prompt students to look closely at one specific text, and connect the work with the larger work of studying the author’s craft.

A suggested schedule for an 80 block of literacy; 40 minutes in Readers Workshop is as follows:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Read-Aloud and Accountable Talk (about 20 minutes)	Mini-lesson (about 10 min)	Read-Aloud and Accountable Talk (about 20 min)	Mini-lesson (about 10 min)	Independent Reading (about 45 min; 10 minute mini lesson and 35 minutes reading)
Independent Reading (about 25 minutes)	Independent Reading (about 30 minutes)	Independent Reading (about 25 min)	Independent Reading (about 30 min)	Small-Group Work (about 10 minutes)
	Share and/or Partner Talk (about 5 min)		Share and/or Partner Talk (about 5 min)	

Writing Workshop: (Approximately 40 minutes daily)

Writing for different purposes in different forms for different audiences is something seventh graders need to be prepared to do. To understand what it means to write well students need time to study the art of writing and the time to write. Having a writing workshop will afford students both of these things. Just like reading workshop, the writing workshop is comprised of 4 parts. It begins with a mini-lesson and is followed by independent writing within a specific genre of writing. During this time students write about self-selected topics as the teacher conferences or pulls together small groups of writers who need the same type of support. At times the teacher meets with individual students. At the end of the writing workshop, there is a teaching share led by the teacher, which often sets up partnership sharing. The teacher often stops conferencing time, mid-workshop teaching point, and a teaching share.

Mini-Lesson- The mini lesson takes place at the beginning of the writing workshop and should last about 10 minutes (no longer than 15). During this time, the teachers clearly state the teaching point for that day. The teacher then models the skill or strategy they are teaching through his/her own writing. Often times a mini-lesson will include a close reading using a mentor text in order to focus on a single skill or strategy. Modeled writing should be written 70% of the time using a topic/scenario that is relevant to the age of the student and 30% of the time using a topic/scenario that is relevant to the age of the teacher. For example, in 6th grade teachers are modeling their own writing with topics that are relevant, and in the moment for 6th graders. In addition, anchor charts are often created as a tool to further model the teaching point. Finally, the students are given a chance to practice the skill or strategy in their own independent writing.

Independent Writing Time/Conferring- At this time, students are working independently, most often practicing the skill or strategy that has been taught in that days’ mini-lesson. During this time, the teacher is conferencing with students about the work they are doing as writers. This is also time for small group strategy lessons.

Mid-Workshop Teaching Point- Many times as teachers are conferring with students, they notice that there is either a common difficulty students are having or that most students seem to grasp the concept and are ready to move on. Thus, the mid-workshop teaching point can be used either to clarify confusion, or to expand upon a strategy to push students to go further in their writing. The mid-workshop teaching point is most often decided during the workshop and comes as a result of teacher observation. This should take no more than 5 minutes.

Share/Partnerships - At the end of a workshop, the teacher takes a couple minutes to wrap up the days' work with a teaching share. Many times the point a teacher makes in the share comes from specific student work from that days' workshop. The share should last no more than 5 minutes. This is also the time where students can meet in their partnerships to discuss the work they are doing as writers.

Interactive Read-Alouds – Units of study sometimes begin with immersion using picture books or text excerpts as a strategy tool. Interactive read-aloud lessons provide writers with models of fluent reading, thinking about a text, questioning, content, text type, purpose, and genre characteristics.

A suggested schedule for an 80 block of literacy; 40 minutes in Writers Workshop is as follows:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Read-Aloud and Accountable Talk (about 20 minutes)	Mini-lesson (about 10 min)	Read-Aloud and Accountable Talk (about 20 min)	Mini-lesson (about 10 min)	Independent Writing (about 30 min; about 30 minutes total; 10 minute mini lesson and 20 minutes of writing)
Writing About Reading (about 25 minutes)	Independent Writing (about 30 minutes total; 10 minute mini lesson and 20 minutes of writing)	Writing About Reading (about 25 min)	Independent Writing (about 30 minutes total; 10 minute mini lesson and 20 minutes of writing)	Small-Group Work (about 10 minutes)
	Share and/or Partner Talk (about 5 min)		Share and/or Partner Talk (about 5 min)	

Vocabulary/Word Study:

Vocabulary instruction is part of a balanced literacy program where vocabulary is focused on and specifically taught. It is a component for each grade and every level of reader and writer. In grade 6, this instruction can be limited to 15-20 minutes. In 6th grade students continue to make use of a range of strategies to determine and clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words. The repertoire includes considering the word's use in a broader context that includes the content of the paragraph in which the word appears and the overarching structure of the text. Students will develop their abilities to interpret a variety of figurative language found in what they read, verify their inferences with word meanings, and make distinction among words based on connotation. Students will acquire new words through interactive language use, including informal talk, discussion, and responding to text as well as being taught words directly. This includes a continuing focus on "Tier 2" word and phrases (those that most commonly appear in spoken language), "Tier 3" words and phrases (those that are specific and important to particular disciplines). It is important for word study and vocabulary development to transfer into students' independent reading and writing. To do this, teacher coach students to draw on what they've learned during word study as they read or write on their own.

Students in grade 6 participate in a spelling and vocabulary exploration program developed by the Kathy Ganske, the author of *Word Journeys*. Students engage in word study activities that are challenging, interactive, and inquiry based. Students explore words and develop an enduring interest in savoring, puzzling over, and coming to know the language we call English. During word study, students activity engage in thinking and questioning, as they increase their awareness of how words are spelling and what they mean. They look for common characteristics to help them generalize understandings to other words. The vocabulary/word study program in 6th grade is a continuation of the K-5 elementary word study program.

An alternative readers/writers workshop schedule for an 80-85 minutes block of literacy while incorporating time for vocabulary/word study instruction is as follows:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
30 minutes Extended Read Aloud with Whole Class Discussion	10 minute mini-lesson	30 minutes Extended Read Aloud with Whole Class Discussion	10 minutes mini-lesson	10 minutes mini-lesson
30 minutes	30 Minutes Independent Reading	25 minutes	25 Minutes Independent Reading	25 Minutes Independent Reading
	35 minutes Writing			

Independent Reading 15 minutes Writing about Reading 5-10 minutes Vocabulary/Word Exploration	(10 minute mini lesson and 25 minutes of writing) 5-10 minutes Vocabulary/Word Exploration	Independent Reading 20 minutes Writing about Reading 5-10 minutes Vocabulary/Word Exploration	40 minutes Writing (10 minute mini lesson and 25 minutes of writing) 10 minutes Vocabulary/Word Exploration	40 minutes Writing (10 minute mini lesson and 25 minutes of writing) 10 minutes Vocabulary/Word Exploration
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III. GOALS (Linked to Core Curriculum Content Standards)

“The following standards offer a focus for instruction to help ensure that students gain adequate exposure to a range of texts and tasks. Rigor is also infused through the requirement that students read increasingly complex texts through the grades.”
(www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RL/introduction-for-6-12/)

Reading Standards for Reading Literature:

Key Ideas and Details:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.1

Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.2

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

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.3

Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.

Craft and Structure:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.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.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.6

Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.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.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.8

(RL.6.8 not applicable to literature)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.9

Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.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 Reading Informational Text:*Key Ideas and Details:*CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.1

Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.2

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

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.3

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

*Craft and Structure:*CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.4

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

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.5

Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.6

Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.

*Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:*CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.7

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

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.8

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

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.9

Compare and contrast one author's presentation of events with that of another (e.g., a memoir written by and a biography on the same person).

*Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity:*CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.10

By the end of the year, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

Writing Standards:

“The following standards for grade 6 offer a focus for instruction to help ensure that students gain adequate mastery of a range of skills and applications. Each year in their writing, students should demonstrate increasing sophistication in all aspects of language use, from vocabulary and syntax to the development and organization of ideas, and they should address increasingly demanding content and sources.” (www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/introduction-for-6-12)

*Text Types and Purposes:*CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.1

Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.1.A

Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.1.B

Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.1.C

Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.1.D

Establish and maintain a formal style.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.1.E

Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.2

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.2.A

Introduce a topic; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.2.B

Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.2.C

Use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.2.D

Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.2.E

Establish and maintain a formal style.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.2.F

Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.3

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

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.3.A

Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.3.B

Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.3.C

Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.3.D

Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.3.E

Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.

Production and Distribution of Writing:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3 above.)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.5

With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising,

editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1-3 up to and including grade 6 [here](#).)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.6

Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of three pages in a single sitting.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.7

Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.8

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

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.9

Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.9.A

Apply *grade 6 Reading standards* to literature (e.g., "Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres [e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories] in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics").

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.9.B

Apply *grade 6 Reading standards* to literary nonfiction (e.g., "Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not").

Range of Writing:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.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:

Comprehension and Collaboration:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1

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

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1.A

Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1.B

Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1.C

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

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1.D

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

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.2

Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.3

Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.4

Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.5

Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, images, music, sound) and visual displays in presentations to clarify information.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.6

Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grade 6 Language standards 1 and 3 for specific expectations.)

Language Standards:

Conventions of Standard English:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.1

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

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.1.A

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

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.1.B

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

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.1.C

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

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.1.D

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

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.1.E

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

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.2

Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.2.A

Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.*

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.2.B

Spell correctly.

Knowledge of Language:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.3

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

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.3.A

Vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style.*

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.3.B

Maintain consistency in style and tone.*

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.4

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.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.4.A

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

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.4.B

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

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.4.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.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.4.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).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.5

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

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.5.A

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

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.5.B

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

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.5.C

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

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.6

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

IV. ASSESSMENT

Student learning will be assessed through:

- Student/ teacher conferences
 - o One-to-one writing and reading conferences are especially important to assess where writers and readers are in their learning. Teachers will meet with students to provide teaching opportunities. Watch with a record sheet in hand, and if children do something you regard as significant to the unit, make a note of it. If you teach a child a particular skill or strategy then record that teaching point.
 - o Conferring with a writer always begins with a teacher pulling alongside a writer and asking, “What are you working on as a writer?” and “What are you trying to do?” and “What are you planning to do next?” (Calkins)
 - o When conferring with a reader a teacher sits alongside a reader and reads over the shoulder of the student for a few seconds then asks, “Tell me about what you’re reading” or “How’s it going today?” or “What are you working on? Show me a place in the text where you tried this” or “What can I help you with? Is there anything you want help with?” or “Can you tell me some of the thinking you recorded on post-its or in your notebook? Will you walk me through some of the thinking you have been doing?” or “Can you read aloud from where you were a bit?” Any of these starting questions are a great beginning in order to research a little about the reader. Teachers then decide what to teach, compliment the reader, and teach a tip to the reader that will help them as a reader, not just with the book, then link the teaching point to what the student is reading.
 - o Teachers generally use some type of system to record notes about readers, either in their own readers notebook, a journal, or an electronic device. These anecdotal notes provide evidence needed for upcoming conferences.
- Reading response journals/Readers Notebooks

- Reading Logs
 - o Reading pace and stamina- Students will *reflect* on their statistics as a reader, keeping track of their reading pace and stamina. “How is the reading going for me? What conditions seem to help me get the most reading done? What fix-up strategies might I use to improve my reading?”
 - o Students should be able to read approximately three-quarters of a page to a page per minute, a little less when the pages become denser. In grade 8 students should read between 235-270 words per minute to be considered in the average range of adequate reading rate. (Harris and Sipay, 1990)
- Contributions to book clubs
- Teacher’s College Reading Level Assessment conducted at least three times a year for students that are below benchmark at the beginning of 8th grade. A student that is on reading benchmark for comprehension, pace, and accuracy at the beginning of 8th grade does not need to have a running record in order to assess reading skills, other methods may be utilized.
- Teacher’s College Scored Common Assessment Student Writings in Narrative, Argument and Information
- Writing samples and student writing portfolios
- Student presentations
- Writer’s Notebooks
- Student Performance Checklists
- Student self-reflection
- Standards Based Writing Rubrics
- Writing Pathways Performance Assessments
- Learning Progressions
 - o Students will collect moments and experiment with writing craft. They’ll rehearse stories, gather research, reflect, and make plans. Some entries are evaluated using a rubric. In class students will collect towards a genre of study, such as in this unit of memoir.
- Rubrics
 - o Used to evaluate the published piece in a unit of study

V. SCOPE AND SEQUENCE (See units of study on attached tables on subsequent pages.)

	Writer’s Workshop	Reader’s Workshop
Unit 1	Personal Narrative Writing	Turning Every Kid Into a Reader—Really! (Fiction Reading)
Unit 2	Realistic Fiction	Studying Characters Through Key Details (Fiction)
Unit 3	Study of the Essay: Personal to Persuasive to Argument	Developing Analytical Literacies: Reading for Perspective and Interpretation Power Across Genres
Unit 4	Informational Writing	Reading to Learn: Synthesizing Nonfiction
Unit 5	Writing to a Prompt: The Genre of Testing	Reading for Test Taking Purposes
Unit 6	Literary Essay	Deepening Thinking about Social Issues Through Historical Fiction
Unit 7	Reflection on our Writing & Independent Writing	From Author Studies to Independent Projects: Launching a Summer of Reading

6th GRADE READING
Readers Workshop: Unit 1 Turning Every Kid Into a Reader--- Really! (Fiction Reading)
(6 weeks September/October)
First Marking Period

Understandings	Teaching Points (Possible Mini-Lessons)	Mentor Texts/Resources
Goals: This unit helps students familiarize themselves with the model of reading workshop and the reading process right from the very first day of school. Students will learn valuable understandings of how to choose a “just right book,” how to use the reader's notebook (writing about reading), and how to read with stamina. Students will learn the basic understanding that reading should be an enjoyable and rewarding experience as long as the reader has the right book in their hands! Students will take personal responsibility over their reading through the use of weekly reading logs and goal setting. 6th graders will be expected to read 6 books each marking period. While students are becoming acquainted with the workshop model, teachers will conduct running records, conduct reading conferences, help establish group book discussion and partner reading. Overall readers will draw upon what and draw upon strategies to read their books. Outcomes: • Read just right books for extended periods of time • Choose just right books • Use the reader's notebook to write about reading • Log reading • Participate in reading conferences with peers and teachers • Develop an appreciation (hopefully a love) of reading • Find students' individual reading levels • Establish book clubs and communities of readers • Carry books between home and school to establish patterns of reading at home and at school. • Compare characters across books and/or series.	See individual unit plans for fiction unit of study on the district shared drive. Possible Mini-Lessons: Bend 1: Helping Readers Develop Agency so they can Lift their Reading into Orbit - Share techniques/reading strategies - Understand that each students' individual reading will propel throughout the year - Choosing book wisely - Setting reading goals/understanding reading statistics Bend 2: Teaching Readers to Read Between the lines - Learn how to use reading strategies to propel through difficult/rich text - How to read closely Bend 3: Talking About Books: The Art of Literacy Conservation - Summarizing and retelling books to partners - Read between the lines - Making an image in your mind - Reading connections - Talking About Books with Partners	Mentor Texts (Instructional Read Aloud): <i>Wonder</i> by R.J. Palacio <i>The Bee Tree</i> by Patricia Polacco <i>Letters to Mr. Faulker</i> by Patricia Polacco <i>Aunt Chip and The Great Triple Creek Dam Affair</i> by Patricia Polacco <i>When Lightning comes in a Jar</i> by Patricia Polacco <i>I Can Hear the Sun</i> by Patricia Polacco <i>Glory Be</i> by Augusta Scattergood <i>Each Kindness</i> by Jacqueline Woodson Possible Chapter Book Read Alouds: <i>Out of My Mind</i>, by Sharon M. Draper <i>Glory Be</i> by Augusta Scattergood Unit Texts (Texts for students to read in book clubs): <i>City of Ember</i> by Jeanne DePrau (Level W) <i>The People of Sparks: The Second Book of Ember</i> by Jeanne DuPrau (Level U) <i>Fire Girl</i> by Tony Abbot (Level V) <i>Out of the Dust</i> by Karen Hesse (Level X) <i>Hatchet</i> by Gary Paulsen (Level R) <i>Stargirl</i> by Jerry Spinelli <i>Julie of the Wolves</i> by Jean Craighead George (Level U) <i>Holes</i> by Louis Sachar (Level V) <i>Knots in my Yo-Yo String</i> by Jerry Spinelli (Level U) <i>My Life in Dog Years</i> by Gary Paulsen (Level S) <i>Peak</i> by Roland Smith (Level T) Teacher Resources: <i>When Kids Can't Read What Teachers Can Do</i> by Kyleene Beers <i>What Really Matters For Struggling Readers</i> by Richard Allington A Curricular Plan for the Readers Workshop, Teachers College Electronic PDF, Grade 6 2011-2012 (Available on the shared drive) Common Assessment: Teachers College Running Record Assessment for any student <u>not</u> on

		benchmark from the end of the year in 5th grade. • Reading Rate (195-220 wpm is benchmark for 6th grade) • Comprehension • Fluency Teachers College Running Records Benchmarks for Beginning of the Year using Fountas and Pinnell Text Gradients (Reading Benchmark: Level V) (Level U : Approaching Expectations) (Level T or below: Does not meet expectations.) • Individual Conferring • Small group book club conversations
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Readers Workshop Unit 2

Studying Characters Through Key Details (Fiction) (4 weeks October/November) First/Second Marking Period

Understandings	Teaching Points (Possible Mini-Lessons)	Mentor Texts/Resources
Goals: Readers will move forward with their newly renewed love of reading and begin to tackle books in the same series or with the same author. They will learn how to analyze characters, plots, themes, and author's craft across texts. Additionally, students will begin the process of writing about literature referencing multiple texts and using text evidence to support thinking. Students will get to know themselves better as readers, set goals as a reader, and keep records about their reading. By the end of this unit students will be able to reflect on the strategies used to read and comprehend a wide array of books in a series, while understanding that books in a series offer a certain amount of expertise readers may use in the long term reading of each book. Ultimately, the goal is for students to envision--- by losing themselves in the text---as they move through any story, whether during read-aloud or as they read independently. Students will envision through every means possible, constantly synthesizing their knowledge of the world with the words on the page. Outcomes: - Find a just right book in a series. - Continue to build reading stamina. - Develop an expertise about books in a series. - An appreciation that strategies and knowledge can be applied to many books within a series - An ability to reference multiple texts using evidence to support thinking. - Classroom discussion about texts - Reflection on strategies used to successfully read, analyze and comprehend books both in the reader's notebook and through conferences. - Long term book club discussion/teacher conferences about multiple books in a series. - Feel passionate about reading. - Learn what kind of reader one is and what kinds of books they like.	See individual unit plans for fiction reading. Readers Workshop Bend 1: Getting to Know Characters. Explore how theme and craft are related in text. - Learning new ideas from characters - Creating theories about characters - Understanding complications within characters - What objects can reveal about characters - Seeing characters through the eyes of other characters - Tracing ideas and theories through texts - Reflection on self as a reader Bend 2: Thinking Deeper About Characters Across a Text or Series. Analyze textual evidence and elaborate upon thinking about complex texts. - Learning deeper belief in theories or ideas - Viewing a series as a collection of episodes - Discover how characters change between books - Compare and Contrast - Analyzing patterns within a series - Looking for common themes - Supporting thinking with text evidence Bend 3: Reading with Increased Expertise and Power - Learning that readers can start books in a series with knowledge and experience they have gained from other books in the series - Analyzing author's craft - Literary analysis	Mentor Texts (Instructional Read Aloud): <u>Out of My Mind</u> by Sharon Draper <u>Wonder (Excerpts only)</u> by R.J. Palacio <u>Flipped</u> by Wendelin Van Draanen <u>The Giving Tree</u> by Shel Silverstein <u>The Paperbag Princess</u> by Robert Munsch <u>Freak the Mighty</u> by Rodman Philbrick <u>Bully</u> by Patricia Polacco <u>The Bee Tree</u> by Patricia Polacco <u>Letters to Mr. Faulker</u> by Patricia Polacco <u>Aunt Chip and The Great Triple Creek Dam Affair</u> by Patricia Polacco <u>When Lightning comes in a Jar</u> by Patricia Polacco <u>I Can Hear the Sun</u> by Patricia Polacco <u>Glory Be</u> by Augusta Scattergood <u>Each Kindness</u> by Jacqueline Woodson Unit Texts (Texts for students to read in book clubs): <u>Walk Two Moons</u> by Sharon Creech(Level W) <u>Pictures of Hollis Woods</u> by Patricia Reilly Giff (Level V) <u>The Emerald Atlas</u> by John Stephens (Level U) <u>The Fire Chronicles</u> by John Stephens (Level U) <u>The Black Reckoning</u> by John Stephens <u>City of Ember</u> by Jeanne DePrau (Level W) <u>The People of Sparks: The Second Book of Ember</u> by Jeanne DuPrau (Level U) <u>Kira Kira</u> by Cynthia Kadohata (Level T) <u>Ida B</u> by Katherine Hannigan (Level T) <u>Eragon</u> by Christopher Paolini(Level Y) <u>Eldest</u> by Christopher Paolini (Level Y) <u>Brisinger</u> by Christopher Paolini (Level Y) <u>Al Capone Shines My Shoes</u> Gennifer Choldenko (Level X) <u>Al Capone Does My Shirts</u> by Gennifer Choldenko (Level X) <u>Guardians of Gahoolle Series</u> by Katherine Lasky (Level V) <u>The River</u> by Gary Paulsen (Level R) <u>Brian's Hunt</u> by Gary Paulsen (Level R) <u>Hatchet</u> by Gary Paulsen (Level R) Teacher Resources:

• Feel and exhibit a sense of independence and agency around finding books and understand that this experience is social. • Read a lot. • Read more than one book in a series in sequence or more than one book by one author. • Prepare for conversations in bookclubs by jotting and quick drafting about their reading. • Build more ideas and perform complex analysis • Use readers notebook to record jottings and thoughts about reading. • Begin conversations about books with central ideas to a text that are provocative enough to merit conversation. • Use evidence from a text to support their thinking. • Listen and talk back to one another. • Read a lot. • Read with increased expertise and power. • Establish book clubs and communities of readers • Carry books between home and school to establish patterns of reading at home and at school.		http://readingandwritingproject.com Core Curriculum Content Standards http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards/english-language-arts-standards Visit the website above for common core anchor papers in writing. Anchor papers provide examples of real student work aligned with the Common Core Writing Standards. Teacher Resources: <i>When Kids Can't Read What Teachers Can Do</i> by Kylene Beers <i>What Really Matters For Struggling Readers</i> by Richard Allington A Curricular Plan for the Readers Workshop, Teachers College Electronic PDF, Grade 6 2011-2012 Unit 2 Investigating Characters Across Series (Available on the shared drive) Common Assessment: Teachers College Running Record Assessment for any student not on benchmark from the end of the year in 5th grade or beginning of the year in 6th grade. • Reading Rate 195-220 wpm is benchmark for 6th grade • Comprehension • Fluency Teachers College Running Records First Interval (Nov./Dec. Expectations) (Reading Benchmark: Level W) (Level V: Approaching Expectations) (Level U or below: Does not meet expectations.) • Individual Conferencing • Small group book club conversations
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Readers Workshop Unit 3

Developing Analytical Literacies: Reading for Perspective and Interpretation Power Across Genres (6 weeks November/December) Second Marking Period

Understandings	Teaching Points (Possible Mini-Lessons)	Mentor Texts/Resources
Goals: Sixth graders have begun to read for plot, and also analyze characters, synthesize information, gather an author's message, and infer motivations, desires, and emotional states about characters. Students have begun to delve deeper into stories, hold conversations with their book club partners that have merit, and keep pace with the increasingly complex story lines in fiction narratives. In this unit of study students will have specific strategy training in analytical reading practices so that they are able to think for themselves and are dissatisfied with easy, literal, and undisputed reading and thinking. Students will learn that stories are never just about one idea—but more than one idea, and that ideas live in more than one text. Students will work on analyzing universal themes from great stories. In order to accomplish the higher-level work of the Common Core State Standards students will work collaboratively in partnerships and small book clubs. During reading workshop, members of a book club will read books together. Students might read books from earlier units of study that they did not have the opportunity to read yet or be introduced to a new book or author that has yet to be introduced in earlier units of study. Students are supported with their learning through individual conferring, small group book club conversations, and small group instruction. Outcomes: - Sharpen analytical skills even more. - Notice more and more in texts. - Observe closely - Understand some crafts of literature - Support ideas with finely grained evidence - Remain open to contradictory themes and ideas. - Hold on to one argument for	See individual unit plans for reading on the shared drive. Readers Workshop Bends in the unit: Bend 1: - Analyzing Our Lives and Literature: Analyze moments in our own lives and in literature for what we can learn from them - Noticing pivotal moments in stories. - Stories are about more than one idea and ideas may appear in more than one story. Bend 2: - Analyzing Differences: Becoming a More Nuanced Reader: Nuanced reading and thinking. Comparing texts that are united thematically to investigate how respective authors have developed theme. Bend 3: - Analyzing Literary Devices and How We are Affected by Texts: Analytical lenses for interpretation that focus on symbolism and literary craft so that students are alert to the metaphors in the texts they encounter.	Mentor Texts (Instructional Read Aloud): <i>The Bee Tree</i> by Patricia Polacco <i>Letters to Mr. Faulker</i> by Patricia Polacco <i>Aunt Chip and The Great Triple Creek Dam Affair</i> by Patricia Polacco <i>When Lightning comes in a Jar</i> by Patricia Polacco <i>I Can Hear the Sun</i> by Patricia Polacco <i>Glory Be</i> by Augusta Scattergood <i>Each Kindness</i> by Jacqueline Woodson Unit Texts (Texts for students to read in book clubs): <i>The Westing Game</i> by Ellen Raskin (V) <i>The Tiger Rising</i> by K. DiCamillo (T) <i>The Teacher's Funeral: A Comedy in Three Parts</i> by Richard Peck (V) <i>Because of Winn Dixie</i> by Kate DiCamillo (R) <i>Eleven</i> by P. Reilly Giff (Unleveled) <i>I Can't Believe I Have to do This</i> by Jan Alford (Unleveled) <i>Love That Dog</i> by Sharon Creech (R) Teacher Resources: <i>When Kids Can't Read What Teachers Can Do</i> by Kyrene Beers <i>What Really Matters For Struggling Readers</i> by Richard Allington A Curricular Plan for the Readers Workshop, Teachers College Electronic PDF, Grade 6 2011-2012 Unit 6 Developing Analytical Practices (Available on the shared drive) Common Assessment: Teachers College Running Record Assessment for students not on benchmark from the end of 5th grade or beginning of the year in 6th grade. - Reading Rate 195-220 wpm is benchmark for 6th grade - Comprehension - Fluency

evaluation while being about to articulate a counter argument. • Deep interpretation of a text. • Develop an argument about the theme of a text. • Remain aware of and reference counterarguments when speaking of a text. • Analyze how at first glance ideas may appear the same or different in their development or in their details. • Think metaphorically • Alert to metaphoric allusions and rhetoric in texts • Analyze two texts and articulate ideas about texts in writing • Use substantive evidence gathered and cited from texts. • Contrast how authors present or develop meaning, theme, or character—first in conversations and then in writing. • Establish book clubs and communities of readers • Carry books between home and school to establish patterns of reading at home and at school.		Teachers College Running Records First Interval (Nov./Dec. Expectations) (Reading Benchmark: Level W) (Level V: Approaching Expectations) (Level U or below: Does not meet expectations.) • Individual Conferring • Small group book club conversations • Reader's Notebook Responses
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Readers Workshop Unit 4 Reading to Learn: Synthesizing Nonfiction
(6 weeks January/February)
Second/Third Marking Period

Understandings	Teaching Points (Possible Mini-Lessons)	Mentor Texts/Resources
Goals: Readers will learn how to read, choose, analyze, and apply non-fiction books. There will be two different types of non-fiction present in this unit: Expository Nonfiction and Narrative Nonfiction. Outcomes: - Students will be exposed to a plethora of nonfiction texts in a variety of new and interesting subjects. - Students will learn how to read nonfiction using text features while synthesizing for information. - Students will learn to apply their knowledge in written response and learn ways to organize and structure said information into their reader's notebook. - Students will be given the opportunity to discuss and change their ideas about historical events, people, etc... - Students will decipher between different types of nonfiction (expository, narrative, & hybrid texts) - Students will listen to read alouds of nonfiction texts to analyze how an experienced reader dissects and interprets information within nonfiction. - Students will pick out the main ideas of non-fiction texts. - Students will learn specific skills and strategies to read and interpret non-fiction, while applying skills they have learned during fictional units of study when reading narrative non-fiction. - Students will appreciate nonfiction literature and become an "expert" of a new subject. - Carry book clubs books home to continue reading at home and at school.	Bend 1: Expository Nonfiction - How to Read Nonfiction (Readying Our Minds) - Structure within Nonfiction - How to choose texts - How to teach others - Main ideas in nonfiction - Talking about nonfiction - Rereading and changing ideas after discussion Bend 2: Narrative Nonfiction - Narrative Nonfiction vs. Fiction (how to identify) - Main characters - Main Ideas - Patterns within Narrative Nonfiction - Envisioning in Narrative Nonfiction	Mentor Texts (Instructional Read Aloud): <i>The Impossible Rescue: The Story of an Amazing Arctic Adventure</i> by Martin W. Sandler (Z) <i>Harvesting Hope: The Story of Cesar Chavez</i> <i>Through My Eyes</i> by Ruby Bridges Unit Texts (Texts for students to read in book clubs): <i>Escape: The Story of the Great Houdini</i> (Unleveled Lexile: 940) <i>Fire in their Eyes: Wildfires and the People Who Fight Them</i> by Karen Magnuson (Unleveled Lexile: 1010) <i>Quest for the Tree Kangaroo: An Expedition to the Cloud Forest of New Guinea</i> by Sy Montgomery (U) <i>Growing Up in Coal Country</i> by Susan Campbell Bartoletti (X) <i>Children of the Great Depression</i> by Russell Freedman (X) <i>Surviving Hitler: A Boy in the Nazi Death Camps</i> by Andrea Warren (Y) <i>War Horse</i> by Michael Morpurgo (Z) <i>Dewey the Library Cat: A True Story</i> by Vicki Myron and Bret Witter (S) <i>The Greatest: Muhammad Ali</i> by W.D.Meyers <i>Steve Jobs: Thinking Differently</i> by Patricia Lakin <i>The Tarantula Scientist</i> by Sy Montgomery (U) Teacher Resources: <i>When Kids Can't Read What Teachers Can Do</i> by Kyleene Beers <i>What Really Matters For Struggling Readers</i> by Richard Allington A Curricular Plan for the Readers Workshop, Teachers College Electronic PDF, Grade 6 2011-2012 Unit 4 Nonfiction Resources Clubs Developing Analytical Lenses for Informational Reading (Available on the shared drive) Common Assessment: Teachers College Running Record

		Assessment for any student not on benchmark from the end of the year in 5th grade or beginning of the year in 6th grade. • Reading Rate 195-220 wpm is benchmark for 6th grade • Comprehension • Fluency Teachers College Running Records First Interval (Nov./Dec. Expectations) (Level W: On Benchmark) (Level V: Approaching Expectations) (Level U or below: Does not meet expectations.) • Reader's Response Notebook entries • Individual Conferring • Small group book club conversations
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Readers Workshop Unit 5 Reading for Test Taking Purposes (Preparation for the PARCC Exam)
Late February (2- 3 weeks)
Second/Third Marking Period

Understandings	Teaching Points (Possible Mini-Lessons)	Mentor Texts/Resources
Goals: The major aim of this unit is to support students in bringing forward strategies for each genre that they have been taught during the year. This unit is also about supporting students in thinking logically and flexibly and in transferring all they know to their test-taking. The PARCC exam will ask students to read multiple texts on a wider variety than in previous standardized tests. Students will need to maintain focus and use a repertoire of strategies across many texts over sixty to seventy minutes. Students will be asked to read longer tests with the average of two to three pages in grade 6. Students will be asked to accumulate and synthesize information and ideas across these longer texts. Sixth grade students will have a reading/test-prep workshop, in which they practice how to read, talk about and answer questions about short test-like texts, as well as multiple-choice strategies. Students will read literature and hone their ability to read complex text closely. Students will analyze informational topics presented through several articles or multimedia stimuli. Outcomes: • Practice with PARCC-like test questions. • Holding onto meaning of passages while reading longer texts • Review of strategies already known for each genre • Identification strategies to identify each genre and predictable questions for each type • Reading flexibly across multiple genres • Marking up of texts, writing answers, and matching answers to choices. • Previewing texts to ascertain the subject and structure, making a quick reading plan and breaking the text into manageable chunks.	• Reinforcement of reading strategies • Predictable Questions • Strategies for answering multiple-choice questions • Strategies for reading too-hard texts; skimming, summarizing, underlining, jotting, and using pictures and headings • Reading question stems and predicting answers before looking at the answer choices. • Answer a series of questions from multiple sources. • Synthesize information from multiple sources. • Writing answers to questions before seeing the answers • Determining the meaning of vocabulary words by reading them in context • Determining the main idea or theme by referring to a big lesson the character learns or that we learn as readers. • Marking text to note important information. • Evaluate evidence across text types. Other possible mini-lessons: Stamina and Resilience Reading Passages Actively Introducing Students to Questions Wrong-Answer Types Teaching Students to Deal with Difficulty Small Group Work Read Alouds Things to Work On with Struggling Test Takers	Mentor Texts (Instructional Read Aloud): Short texts that are stories, poems, articles from multiple sources: <i>Highlights</i> <i>Cricket</i> <i>Cobblestone</i> <i>Read and Rise</i> <i>Story Works</i> <i>Sports Illustrated for Kids</i> Unit Texts (Texts for students to read in book clubs): Teacher Resources: • www.achievethecore.org • A Curricular Plan for Readers Workshop, Teachers College Units of Study Unit ____, 2011-2012 Assessment: • Teachers College Running Record Assessment for all students using second interval Feb./Mar. benchmarks. (Reading Benchmark: Level Y) (Approaching Expectations: Level X) (Below Benchmark: Level W or below) • Reading Rate Benchmark 195-220 Words per minute

Readers Workshop Unit 6 Deepening Thinking About Social Issues Through Historical Fiction
(5-6 weeks April/May)
Third/Fourth Marking Period

Understandings	Teaching Points (Possible Mini-Lessons)	Mentor Texts/Resources
Goals: This unit will rely upon information studied during the nonfiction unit of study, while allowing students to conduct “flash research” to help them gain background knowledge of the time period. Through this unit readers will gain an appreciation for deeper themes within historical fiction, and come a realization that fiction and nonfiction can be woven together to create a powerful interpretation of a historical time period, person, movement, etc... An emphasis will be placed upon the use of timelines to allow students to place the people and events in the novels/stories in perspective. Outcomes: - Students will learn techniques for reading, analyzing, and interpreting historical fiction. - Students will be able to keep track of timelines in their reader’s notebooks. - Students will see the importance of themes within historical fiction and analyze how those powerful themes fit into their understanding of the world in which they live. - Students will continue to use skills learned in both fictional and nonfiction units of study. - Students will participate in book clubs to discuss and gain understanding of reading. - Students will gain skills and understanding necessary to see the fiction and nonfiction elements within historical fiction. - Students will write literary responses to historical fiction texts. - Read a lot.	Bend 1: Tools for Reading and Interpreting Historical Fiction - Background knowledge - Real vs. Fictional - Peer collaboration for understanding historical fiction - Story Elements - Timelines in historical fiction - Characters - Thinking as someone else - Close reading of descriptions - Understanding different interpretations of historical fiction (different readers gain different ideas/thoughts from the same texts) - Main ideas Bend 2: Thinking Deeply about History through Historical Fiction - Main characters and sub characters (What can we learn?) - Themes in historical fiction - Impact: How does our knowledge of history make a difference in our lives?	Mentor Texts (Instructional Read Aloud): <u>Glory Be</u> by Augusta Scattergood <u>Rose Blanche</u> by Roberto Innocenti <u>Your Move</u> by Eve Bunting <u>The Butterfly House</u> by Patricia Polacco <u>Henry’s Freedom Box: A True Story from the Underground Railroad</u> by Ellen Levine <u>A Sweet Smell of Roses</u> by Angela Johnson <u>The Yellow Star: The Legend of King Christian X of Denmark</u> by Carmen Agra Deedy <u>The Cats in Kransinski Square</u> by Karen Hesse and Wendy Watson <u>The Butter Battle Book</u> by Dr. Seuss Unit Texts (Texts for students to read in book clubs): <u>Out of the Dust</u> by Karen Hesse (Y) <u>The Witness</u> by Karen Hesse (W) <u>Okay for Now</u> by Gary Schmidt (Y) <u>The Wednesday Wars</u> by Gary Schmidt (X) <u>War Horse</u> by Michael Morpurgo (Z) <u>Al Capone Shines My Shoes</u> by Gennifer Choldenko (X) <u>Al Capone Does My Shirts</u> by Gennifer Choldenko (X) <u>The Devil’s Arithmetic</u> by J.Yolen (Y) <u>The Island on Bird Street</u> by Uri Orlev (X) <u>Number the Stars</u> by Lois Lowry (U) <u>The Woods Runner</u> by Gary Paulsen (Y) Teacher Resources: <u>When Kids Can’t Read What Teachers Can Do</u> by Kylene Beers <u>What Really Matters For Struggling Readers</u> by Richard Allington A Curricular Plan for the Readers Workshop, Teachers College Electronic PDF, Grade 6 2011-

		2012 Unit 5 Historical Fiction Book Clubs Tackling Complex Texts (Available on the shared drive) Assessment: Common Assessment: Teachers College Running Record Assessment for any student not on benchmark from first interval assessment. • Reading Rate 195-220 words per minute is benchmark for 6th grade • Comprehension • Fluency Teachers College Running Records End of Year (May/June Expectations) (Level Y: On Benchmark) (Level X: Approaching Expectations) (Level W or below: Does not meet expectations.) • Reader's Response Notebook entries • Individual Conferring • Small group book club conversations
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Readers Workshop Unit 7 From Author Studies to Independent Projects: Launching a Summer of Reading
(4-5 weeks May/June)
Fourth Marking Period

Understandings	Teaching Points (Possible Mini-Lessons)	Mentor Texts/Resources
Goals: During this unit of study students will recurve their identities as readers. Specifically, they will identify one book, one author, who speaks to them and use this power to leverage themselves into becoming experts on everything the author has written and also everything this author stands for. This unit hopes to establish in students the power of knowing, loving, and studying an author's work, or eagerly anticipating reading another work by this author, of becoming enriched by the craft (and life) lessons of this author's books. Students may select favorite authors they have studied this school year and select a new book to read by this author. They might reread a favorite text. By this time of year many favorite authors are on students' minds: Suzanne Collins, Walter Dean Myers, Jacqueline Woodson, Rick Riordan, Laurie Halse Anderson, Gary Soto, Gary Paulsen, Judy Bloom, Sharon Creech, Matthew Cody, Mike Lupica, Cynthia Lord, J.K. Rowling, Walter Farley—and many others. This unit revs students up for a summer of reading! Outcomes: • Collaborate with peers about favorite books and authors • Read and discuss books with peers. • Compare notes about books and authors. • Reading or rereading one or two books by a favorite author. • Note the settings and characters an author creates • Note whether problems of characters in one book are similar to the problems other characters face in other books. • Note and name specific craft	Bend 1: When Readers Read More Than One Book by the Same Author, We Come to Know that Author Bend 2: When We Read Many Books by an Author We Love, We Apprentice Ourselves to That Author's Craft • Study different aspects of a text and devise ways to pull it out of context and compare it to other works by the same author. Bend 3: Becoming an Author Expert • Cross-textual references • Memories of previous characters and plotlines • Familiar craft moves • Syntax patterns Bend 4: Reflecting on How Authors Have Changed Them (and Set Plans for Summer Reading) • Nurture and develop an idea • Write a quick literary essay explaining their connection to a particular book or a particular author. • Select books for summer reading and begin summer reading log.	Mentor Texts (Instructional Read Aloud): Teacher Choice: Select picture books written by authors who have also written short stories or short novels. For example: <u><i>When I Was Young in the Mountains</i></u> by Cynthia Rylant <u><i>An Angel for Solomon Singer</i></u> by Cynthia Rylant <u><i>Every Living Thing</i></u> by Cynthia Rylant Unit Texts (Texts for students to read in book clubs): <u><i>The Wanderer</i></u> by S. Creech (Level V) <u><i>Walk Two Moons</i></u> by S. Creech (Level W) <u><i>The Emerald Atlas</i></u> by J. Stephens (Level U) <u><i>The Fire Chronicles</i></u> by J. Stephens (Level U) <u><i>Eragon</i></u> by C. Paolini (Level Y) <u><i>Eldest</i></u> by C. Paolini (Level Y) <u><i>City of Ember</i></u> by J. DuPrau (Level U) <u><i>The People of Sparks: The Second Book of the City of Ember</i></u> (Level U) or any text from a previous unit. Self-selected texts from the classroom library, media center, public library, book store, friend, etc. Teacher Resources: <u><i>When Kids Can't Read What Teachers Can Do</i></u> by Kylene Beers <u><i>What Really Matters For Struggling Readers</i></u> by Richard Allington A Curricular Plan for the Readers Workshop, Teachers College Electronic PDF, Grade 6 2011-2012 Unit 9 From Author

moves that the author makes • Read many books by one particular author so as to compare and contrast texts. • Analyze themes that recur in author's books and evaluate the bigger life messages that authors seem to bring forward in every book. • Reflect as to why one gravitates toward a particular author or genre of text and analyze how this author's work moves or shapes his or her own thinking about a particular subject. • Come up with theories about themes an author typically addresses.		Studies to Independent Projects Launching a Summer of Reading (Available on the shared drive) Common Assessment: Teachers College Running Record Assessment for any student not on benchmark from first interval assessment. • Reading Rate 195-220 words per minute is benchmark for 6th grade • Comprehension • Fluency Teachers College Running Records End of Year (May/June Expectations) (Level Y: On Benchmark) (Level X: Approaching Expectations) (Level W or below: Does not meet expectations.) • Reader's Response Notebook entries • Individual Conferring • Small group book club conversations
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6th GRADE WRITING

Writers Workshop ~ Personal Narrative Writing

Unit 1 September/October (4-5 weeks)

First Marking Period

Understandings	Teaching Points (Possible Mini-Lessons)	Mentor Texts/Resources
Goals: This unit will tap into students' motivation to write based on personal topics. Writers will write true stories while focusing on different angles of a story they may already be familiar with. Writers will practice collecting ideas, drafting in their writer's notebooks, and narrowing down bigger thinking into smaller, manageable pieces. Writers will begin to structure their writing, essentially taking a big moment and discovering the smaller, and more important meaning. Most importantly, students will refamiliarize themselves with the workshop model they will be using throughout the course of the entire year. Students will continue to use skills learned in 5th grade, while adding to their writing repertoire with additional focus on structure and narrative storytelling elements. Additionally, writers will read memoirs and narratives through the use of read aloud books, mentor texts, and independent reading as to truly immerse in the genre of personal narrative writing. This unit will lay the groundwork for other types of writing students will be doing both throughout the year and in future high-stakes writing. Teachers and students will begin to discover the "voices" within the classroom allowing for an individualized classroom. This type of writing is a "window into life" and reveals who a narrator truly is." Outcomes - Writers will write fast and furiously both at school and at home. - Writers will remain engaged in writing, including talking, planning, and drafting for 60 minutes. - Students will work on both independent and unit based projects. - Students will revise their draftings by looking through their writer's notebook entries to ratchet up their own work with skills, strategies, mentor texts, and talks with partners. - Our writers should spell correctly when writing. - Students will begin to see that editing is also about considering the tone and cadence of a piece, and begin to vary sentence length to create a desired rhythm or to affect meaning for the reader.	Units of study are divided into bends, or parts, with each offering a new portion of the journey. See individual unit plans for narrative writing on the shared drive. Bend 1: Launching Independent Writing Lives and Generating Personal Narratives Possible Mini Lessons: - Setting up to write - Calling on all strategies to write up a storm - Telling the story from the narrator's point of view - Reading closely to learn from other authors - Taking stock: Pausing to Assess and Set Goals Bend 2: Moving through the Writing Process and toward Our Goals - Rehearsing: Experimenting with Beginnings - Flash-Drafting: Get the whole story on the page - Using Writer's Notebooks for Mindful, Goal Driven Work - Re-Angling and Rewriting to Convey What a Story is Really About - Elaborating on Important Scenes and Adding New Ones from the Past - Using all available resources to aid with final touches Bend 3: Writing a Second Personal Narrative with New Independence - Taking Charge of the Writing Process: Deciding where to begin and how to revise from the get-go - Slowing down and stretching out the story's problem - Ending stories in meaningful ways - Editing sentences for rhythm and meaning - Publishing and celebrating as a community of writer's	Mentor Texts (Instructional Read Aloud): <i>Seedfolks</i> by Sid Fleishman (Level W) <i>The Wand in the Word</i> by Leonard Marcus <i>This is Just to Say</i> by Joyce Kilmer <i>Boy: Tales of Childhood</i> by Roald Dahl <i>Guys Write for Guys Read</i> by Jon Scieszka <i>Looking Back</i> by Lois Lowry <i>Love That Dog</i> by Sharon Creech <i>The Circuit</i> by Francisco Jimenez Teacher Resources: http://readingandwritingproject.com/ Core Curriculum Content Standards http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards/english-language-arts-standards A Curricular Plan for the Writers Workshop, Teachers College Electronic PDF, Grade 6 2011-2012 Unit (Available on the shared drive) <i>Units of Study for Argument, Information, and Narrative Writing</i> by Lucy Calkins and Colleagues from The Reading and Writing Project Grade 6 Published from Heinemann <i>Schoolwide Personal Narrative Writing</i> by Writing Fundamentals Grade 6 Published by Writing Fundamentals <i>Writing Pathways Grades 6-8 Performance Assessments and Learning Progressions</i> by Lucy Calkins and Audra Kirshbaum Robb and Colleagues from the Teachers College of Reading and Writing Project. Assessment: Reader's Response Notebook entries Individual Conferencing Small group book club conversations Narrative Checklist

Writers Workshop
Realistic Fiction Unit 2 (6 weeks October/November)
First Marking Period

Understandings	Teaching Points (Possible Mini-Lessons)	Mentor Texts/Resources
Goals: In the realistic fiction unit of study, writers will apply the knowledge of everything they learned in narrative writing to help them write a realistic fiction story. Writers will further develop their skill by learning that realistic fiction is a story that can actually happen in real life, and may still be drawn from real life experiences. Writers will refine their skills on how to address an audience and develop deeper themes within their writing. Through the use of mentor texts, writers will learn about how to develop characters, setting, and plot to help drive their realistic fiction stories. The unit will end in allowing writers to publish and celebrate their realistic fiction creations! Writers will continue to focus on going through the steps of the writing process within a workshop model. Writers will also continue to conference with teacher and peers to develop and refine writing. Writers should write at least two realistic fiction pieces. Outcomes • Develop realistic fiction with rich characters, settings and plot • Go through the writing process from collection to publishing • Understand the genre of realistic fiction • Sample various leads, endings and ideas in realistic and understand that writing is not a “one and done” process • Write at least two realistic fiction pieces to full publication. • Write many drafts of realistic fiction pieces in a writers’ notebook.	Units of study are divided into bends, or parts, with each offering a new portion of the journey. Bend 1: Understanding how and why writers write realistic fiction • Even though this isn’t personal, writers still write about what they know. • Developing characters, plots, issues, conflicts, and solution. • Realistic fiction comes from real events! • Purpose and themes within realistic fiction • Addressing an audience • Collecting notebook entries Bend 2: Taking ideas and putting them on paper! Create a story! • Writing doesn’t need to start from the beginning • Creating a setting • Creating characters • Creating leads • Sampling various leads and endings (Writing is not one and done!) • Using mentor texts as inspiration • Different ways writers publish realistic fiction	Mentor Texts (Instructional Read Aloud): <i>The Bee Tree</i> by Patricia Polacco <i>Letters to Mr. Faulker</i> by Patricia Polacco <i>Aunt Chip and The Great Triple Creek Dam Affair</i> by Patricia Polacco <i>When Lightning comes in a Jar</i> by Patricia Polacco <i>I Can Hear the Sun</i> by Patricia Polacco <i>Glory Be</i> by Augusta Scattergood <i>Each Kindness</i> by Jacqueline Woodson <i>Those Shoes</i> <i>Your Move</i> by Eve Bunting Teacher Resources: http://readingandwritingproject.com/ Core Curriculum Content Standards http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards/english-language-arts-standards • A Curricular Plan for the Writers Workshop, Teachers College Electronic PDF, Grade 6 2011-2012 Unit (Available on the shared drive) • <i>Units of Study for Argument, Information, and Narrative Writing</i> by Lucy Calkins and Colleagues from The Reading and Writing Project Grade 6 Published from Heinemann • <i>Schoolwide Personal Narrative Writing</i> by Writing Fundamentals Grade 6 Published by Writing Fundamentals • <i>Writing Pathways Grades 6-8 Performance Assessments and Learning Progressions</i> by Lucy Calkins and Audra Kirshbaum Robb and Colleagues from the Teachers College of Reading and Writing Project. Assessment: Realistic Fiction Student Writing Scored with Rubric for Narrative Writing (Scores recorded into Genesis. Reference: Pg. 207 in <i>Writing Pathways</i>) • Reader’s Response Notebook entries • Individual Conferring • Small group book club conversations • Narrative Checklist

Writers Workshop Unit 3 Study of the Essay: Personal to Persuasive to Argument
November/December (6 weeks)
First/Second Marking Period

Understandings	Teaching Points (Possible Mini-Lessons)	Mentor Texts/Resources
Goals: Personal essays explore a writer's thoughts, feelings, and opinions about subjects connected to their experiences and lives. Personal essays do not try to urge or persuade, these essays simply share. In this unit students will begin with the study and writing of personal essay to transition from narrative writing to essay writing. Here students will learn about the structure and organization used for essay writing. They will refine their boxes and bullets skills, and view multiple personal essays, while crafting their own. Persuasive/Argument essays explore a writer's opinion about many topics such as social, political, economic, and world issues. Persuasive essays try to urge a reader to change their minds or see the perspective of the writers. Persuasive essays try to enact change. In this bend of the unit, students will learn the structure of a persuasive argument essay and learn how to support their ideas with information. There will be an emphasis on transitions and persuasive language to help build an argument. Students will learn how to address an audience, explain why their issue is important, and create a convincing call to action to support their thinking. Outcomes: - Understand structure of essay writing - Boxes and Bullets - Persuasive language and transitions - Call to action - Explain why the issue is important - Read and analyze multiple texts about a topic to draw conclusions and develop an argument - Write on demand essays - Conduct research for research based argument essays - Analyze and organize resources - Use voice in essay writing - Understand that persuasive writing can serve as a vehicle for social change	Bend 1: Personal Essay - Reading personal essay - Writers write about what they know - Deciphering how personal essay is different from persona narrative - Elements of personal essay: Thesis and supporting reasons - Structure of personal essay: Boxes and Bullets - Writing and publishing a personal essay - Writers craft their sentences carefully and deliberately - Writers craft their paragraphs carefully and deliberately Bend 2: Persuasive/Argument Essay - Choosing a topic (Something you are interested and passionate about) - Choose a side (Stronger or weaker) - Boxes and Bullets - Supporting main ideas - Parts of an opening paragraph (Understanding why the issue is important) - Persuasive Language - Transitions - Call to Action - Audience Bend 3: Research Based Argument Essay 4 Corners - Real life uses of argument writing - Dogs in School Argument - Chocolate Milk Argument - On Demand - Choosing an argument - Credible Sources - Dissecting Research - Thesis and Supporting Evidence - Review and Organize - Conferring - Explain why the issue is important - Read and analyze multiple texts about a topic to draw conclusions and develop an argument - Write on demand essays - Conduct research for research based argument essays - Analyze and organize resources - Use voice in essay writing - View real life examples of persuasive & argument writing and see the change they created.	Mentor Texts (Instructional Read Aloud): Becoming a Vegetarian: A Matter of Taste Lego Essay Easy Bake Oven Essay Do You Believe in Me? (speech) Patrick Henry's "Liberty or Death" Gettysburg Address I Have a Dream Louis Gehrig's Farewell Speech Churchill "Never Give In" Speech Dogs in School Articles Chocolate Milk Articles <i>The Lorax</i> by Dr. Suess <i>Read All About It!</i> By Jim Trelease <i>Father Water, Mother Woods</i> by Gary Paulsen <i>Feathers and Fools</i> by Mem Fox <i>The Giving Tree</i> by Shel Silverstein Teacher Resources: http://readingandwritingproject.com/ Core Curriculum Content Standards http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards/english-language-arts-standards A Curricular Plan for the Writers Workshop, Teachers College Electronic PDF, Grade 6 2011-2012 Unit (Available on the shared drive) <i>Units of Study for Argument, Information, and Narrative Writing</i> by Lucy Calkins and Colleagues from The Reading and Writing Project Grade 6 Published from Heinemann <i>Schoolwide Personal Narrative Writing</i> by Writing Fundamentals Grade 6 Published by Writing Fundamentals <i>Writing Pathways Grades 6-8 Performance Assessments and Learning Progressions</i> by Lucy Calkins and Audra Kirshbaum Robb and Colleagues from the Teachers College of Reading and Writing Project. Assessment: - Reader's Response Notebook entries - Individual Conferring - Small group book club conversations - Argument Checklist

Writers Workshop Unit 4 Informational Writing
January/February (6 weeks)
Second/Third Marking Period

Understandings	Teaching Points (Possible Mini-Lessons)	Mentor Texts/Resources
Goals: The writing portion of this unit will teach students how to conduct research. Students will learn how to move through the steps of finding a narrow topic, creating research questions and using multiple resources for information. Students will learn to take organized notes as well as how to integrate information into a written piece. Students will participate in book clubs in the reading portion of this unit. The reading unit will sharpen students' analytical skills, teaching them to notice more in the texts they read and to become more nuanced in their language, sharpening their minds for any kind of analytical thinking. This unit will teach them to observe closely, to understand some of the craft of literature, to support their ideas with finely grained evidence, and to remain open to contradictory ideas. Outcomes: • Convey ideas and information about a subject in a well-structured text. • Incorporate arguments, explanations, stories, or procedural passages when appropriate. • Write an introduction which interests readers possibly with a quote or a significant fact. • Let readers know the subtopics and how they will unfold in the text. • Use transitions to help readers understand how different bits of information and different parts of writing fit together. • Use transitions to connect ideas, information, and examples and to imply relationships. • Write a conclusion which restates the important ideas or offers a final insight. • Chose a focused subject to write about. • Use subheadings and/or clear introductory transitions to separate sections. • Include varied kinds of information such as facts, quotes, examples, and definitions. • Include concrete details, comparisons, and/or images to explain information. • Incorporate domain-specific vocabulary when necessary. • Support readers' learning by using a teaching tone and a formal style as appropriate. • Use resources when writing so that words are spelled correctly. • Use punctuation such as dashes, parentheses, colons, and semicolons to help include extra information. • Cite references using appropriate punctuation.	Units of study are divided into bends, or parts, with each offering a new portion of the journey. Bend 1: (Students will learn to write research-based informational essays.) Writing Research Based Informational Essays • Becoming Engaged with a Topic • Reading for a Wide View of a Topic: Teen Activism • Preparing to write informational essays: Finding and supporting key points • Structure Sets You Free: Using Prior Knowledge to Flash-Draft Essays Bend 2: (Choose a compelling issue to write about—such as the fight against child labor or the campaign for the preservation of the environment—by following a trail of research.) • The trail of research: Pursuing information and focusing on topics • Envisioning structure to plan an information book • Constructing texts with solid bricks of information • Research: Gathering Specific Information and Creating Meaning • Writing with detail • Lifting the level of sentence complexity • Using text features to strengthen writing • Planning ready-to-go chapters • Quoting with a Purpose in Mind • Celebrating with a Book Exhibit Tour Bend 3: (Sharing knowledge on a digital platform such as websites or digital slideshow presentations. Students will share their work, promoting awareness and activism for the issues they've chosen.) • Studying Digital Mentor Texts • Revising to Fit Digital Formats: Determining Importance • Pouring into Digital Forms... and Publishing • Celebration: Presentations, Feedback, and Reflection	Mentor Texts (Instructional Read Aloud): <i>A Teen Guide to Global Action</i> by Barbara A. Lewis Malala Youszafzai, the Pakistani education activist speech “Malala Yousafzai Speaks Out” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X3vK5qVNOWw Alex Lin, lobbyist for e-waste legislation https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wegt0N0vxH4 Youtube search term: “Alex Lin Helps Reduce E-Waste” <i>Animals in the House: A History of Pets and People</i> by Sheila Keenan <i>Ladies First</i> by Ken Rappoport <i>Team Moon</i> by Catherine Thimmesh <i>The Wall</i> by Peter Sis <i>Talking Trash</i> by Loree Griffin Burns Teacher Resources: http://readingandwritingproject.com/ A Curricular Plan for the Writers Workshop, Teachers College Electronic PDF, Grade 6 2011-2012 Unit (Available on the shared drive) <i>Units of Study for Argument, Information, and Narrative Writing</i> by Lucy Calkins and Colleagues from The Reading and Writing Project Grade 6 Published from Heinemann <i>Schoolwide Personal Narrative Writing</i> by Writing Fundamentals Grade 6 Published by Writing Fundamentals <i>Writing Pathways Grades 6-8 Performance Assessments and Learning Progressions</i> by Lucy Calkins and Audra Kirshbaum Robb and Colleagues from the Teachers College of Reading and Writing Project. <i>Research-Based Information Writing</i> Grade 6 Written by Lucy Calkins, Maggie Beattie Roberts, & Emily Strong Campbell CD-ROM for Informational Writing included in the Units of Study. Assessment: • Reader's Response Notebook entries • Individual Conferencing • Small group book club conversations • Information Checklist Common Assessment in Informational Writing Scored with Teachers College Information Rubric. See page vii in the <i>Research-Based Informational Writing</i> book.

Writers Workshop Unit 5 Writing to a Prompt: The Genre of Testing (PARCC Test Prep)
Late February (2 weeks)
Second/Third Marking Period

Understandings	Teaching Points (Possible Mini-Lessons)	Mentor Texts/Resources
Goals: During this unit students will read short texts and write several pieces to demonstrate they can read and understand sufficiently complex texts independently; write effectively when using and analyzing sources; and build and communicate knowledge by integrating, comparing, and synthesizing ideas. Students will be asked write narratives with a possibility of many formats: convey experiences or events, real or imaginary, write a story, detail a scientific process, write a historical account of an important figure, or to describe an account of events, scenes or objects. Outcomes: • Experience with sample items and prototypes • Experience with PARCC tutorial for students at http://practice.parcc.testnav.com/# • Effective and comprehensive development of a claim, topic and/or narrative elements by using clear and convincing reasoning, details, and text-based evidence, and/or description • Purposeful coherence, clarity, and cohesion with a strong introduction and a logical, well-executed progression of ideas, making it easy to follow the writer's progression of ideas. • Effective style while attending to the norms of conventions of grammar. • Preparation for the ELA/Literacy PBAs which includes three tasks: a research simulation task, a literary analysis task, and a narrative task. • Practice with literary and	• Reinforcement of writing strategies • Determining the meaning of vocabulary words by reading them in context • Determining the main idea or theme by referring to a big lesson the character learns or that we learn as readers • Underline important places where information is learning and annotate when they learn something about a character, jot in margins any problems the character may face, note instances when characters change, identify big ideas of article sections. • Narrative writing using a text stimulus • Reading of one or more texts, answer several short, comprehension and vocabulary questions, and then write an essay that requires students to draw evidence from the text(s). • Analyze informational topics presented through several articles or multimedia stimuli- the first being an anchor text that introduces a topic. • Answer a series of questions and synthesize information from multiple sources in order to write two analytic essays. Other possible mini-lessons: • Things to Work On with Struggling Test Takers • Wrong-Answer types Teaching Students to Deal with Difficulty • Convey experiences or events, real imaginary in a narrative writing format. • Write a story. • Detail a scientific process • Write a historical account of an important figure. • Describe an account of events, scenes, or objects.	Mentor Texts (Instructional Read Aloud): Short texts that are stories, poems, articles from multiple sources: <i>Highlights</i> <i>Cricket</i> <i>Cobblestone</i> <i>Read and Rise</i> <i>Story Works</i> <i>Sports Illustrated for Kids</i> Unit Texts (Texts for students to read in book clubs): Teacher Resources: • www.achievethecore.org • A Curricular Plan for Readers Workshop, Teachers College Units of Study Grade 6 Unit 7 March/April, 2011-2012 • Condensed scoring rubric for prose constructed response items: http://www.parcconline.org/sites/parcc/files/Grade6-11-ELACondensedRubricFORANALYTICANDNARRATIVEWRITING.pdf

Writers Workshop Unit 6 Literary Essay
March/April (4-6 weeks)
Third Marking Period

Understandings	Teaching Points (Possible Mini-Lessons)	Mentor Texts/Resources
Goals: In grade 6 students craft essays that make arguments about characters and themes, learning strategies essayists use to gather, analyze, and explain evidence from the text to support their claims. This writers workshop unit of study parallels the unit of study in readers workshop on historical fiction. Students will read about characters set in historically significant times in history. This unit lays the foundation for the work that readers will do later in their reading lives. As they get older they will write about their reading with greater frequency as they move on to high school and college. In this unit of study students will go through three incarnations of essay writing—character based, theme-based, and compare-contrast—each one building on the last. Students will learn the foundational moves of essay writing—that essays have a structure that is common to them, that there are claims, with supports, and evidence. Outcomes: • Learn to express their thoughts while reading. • Name ideas succinctly and to back up ideas and observations with strong evidence. • Evaluate the strength of the evidence they choose • Write with voice and clarity • Incorporate quotes with context and precision. • Hold on to one's thinking about a particular subject, or about a particular text. • Clarify and elaborate on their thinking.	Units of study are divided into bends, or parts, with each offering a new portion of the journey. Bend 1: Writing Strong Literary Essays (Assess and determine what students know and do not know about essay writing as well as introduce in broad strokes some of the root moves of essay writing that will be developed later on. Draft and revise a simple essay about a character.) • Essay Boot Camp • Growing Big Ideas from Details about Characters • Writing to Discover What a Character Really Wants • Crafting Claims • Conveying Evidence: Summarizing and Storytelling • Studying a Mentor Text to Construct Literary Essays • Revising Essays to Be Sure You Analyze as Well as Cite Text Evidence Bend 2: Elevating the Complexity of Literary Essays (Draft again a simple essay about a character but this time angling their essays to consider the theme of the text they are analyzing.) • Looking for Themes in the Trouble of a Text • Drafting Using All that You Know • First Impressions and Closing Remarks • Quoting Texts • Editing Inquiry Centers Bend 3: Writing Compare and Contrast Essays (Compare two texts through the lens of a common theme, teaching students to consider the similarities and differences in the ways two texts deal with an issue or problem.) • Building the Muscles to Compare and Contrast • Comparing and Contrasting Themes across Texts • Applying What you Have Learned in the Past to Today's Revision Work • Identifying Run-Ons and Sentence Fragments • Celebrating Literary Essays	Mentor Texts (Instructional Read Aloud): <u>"Thank-You, Ma'am,"</u> by Langston Hughes <u>"The Gift of the Magi,"</u> by O'Henry <u>"Everything Will Be Okay,"</u> by James Howe <u>"Freak the Geek,"</u> by John Green <u>"Your Move,"</u> by Eve Bunting <u>"Stray,"</u> by Cynthia Rylant <u>"Raymond's Run,"</u> by Toni Cade Bambara <u>"These Shoes,"</u> by Mariebeth Moelts <u>"Edward's Eyes,"</u> by Patricia McLaughlin Resources: http://readingandwritingproject.com/ • A Curricular Plan for the Writers Workshop, Teachers College Electronic PDF, Grade 6 2011-2012 Unit (Available on the shared drive) • <u>Units of Study for Argument, Information, and Narrative Writing</u> by Lucy Calkins and Colleagues from The Reading and Writing Project Grade 6 Published from Heinemann • <u>Writing Pathways Grades 6-8 Performance Assessments and Learning Progressions</u> by Lucy Calkins and Audra Kirshbaum Robb and Colleagues from the Teachers College of Reading and Writing Project. • <u>The Literary Essay From Characters to Compare/Contrast</u> Grade 6 Written by Kate Roberts and Kathleen Tolan CD-ROM for Informational Writing included in the Units of Study. Assessment: • Reader's Response Notebook entries • Individual Conferencing • Small group book club conversations • Opinion & Argument Checklist • Learning Progressions • Exemplar Texts Common Assessment in Argument Writing Scored with Teachers College Information Rubric. See page viii in the <u>The Literary Essay From Characters to Compare/Contrast</u> book. Use the Learning Progressions for Argument writing. While the literary essay is not a perfect example of an argument, and shares many qualities with informational writing, it's structure and skills most closely align with this progression and these Common Core Standards.

Writers Workshop Unit 7

Reflection on our Writing and Independent Writing May/June (4 weeks) Fourth Marking Period

Understandings	Teaching Points (Possible Mini-Lessons)	Mentor Texts/Resources
Goals: The final unit of study in writers workshop is a celebratory unit to celebrate all that has become of our writers. Students have spent the year writing every day investing themselves in their writing by choosing to write about topics that were important to them as writers and as individuals. In this unit of study students will continue to write for real, to write the kinds of texts that they see in the world, to write for an audience of readers, not just for the teacher's red pen. In the parallel readers workshop unit of study students are identifying one book, one author, who speaks to them and use this power to leverage themselves into becoming experts on everything the author has written and also everything this author stands for. In the writers workshop unit of study students will have the opportunity to become even more skilled and fluent in writing across genres. This unit doesn't mean that students get to do whatever they want to do. It means they will be thinking through ideas in generating and rehearsing, planning, drafting, revising, editing and publishing. Students will be taught to make careful choices about genre and topic and to go through the writing process on their own. Outcomes: • Collect ideas for projects. • Two drafts of a project. • Consider the significance of their topic—perhaps a theme, what they want to say, the point they are trying to make, or what they wish to communicate.	Units of study are divided into bends, or parts, with each offering a new portion of the journey. Bend 1: Becoming More Skilled and Fluent in Writing Across Genres • Setting up structures for writing independently. • Collecting Ideas and Thinking Through Ideas for Independent Projects • Making Careful Choices About Genre and Topic • Establishing Independence in the Writing Process Bend 2: Support Our Writing • Author's Craft • Time Lines for Deadlines • Working Productively Through the Unit • Interdependence Between Writers • What Final Projects Might Look Like Bend 3: Celebrating All That We Are as Writers • Seeing the Work of Others and Celebrating One's Own Work	Mentor Texts (Instructional Read Aloud): Teacher Choice depending upon student projects Resources: http://readingandwritingproject.com/ Core Curriculum Content Standards http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards/english-language-arts-standards • A Curricular Plan for the Writers Workshop, Teachers College Electronic PDF, Grade 6 2011-2012 Unit 9 <i>Independent Writing</i> (Available on the shared drive) • <i>Units of Study for Argument, Information, and Narrative Writing</i> by Lucy Calkins and Colleagues from The Reading and Writing Project Grade 6 Published from Heinemann • <i>Writing Pathways Grades 6-8 Performance Assessments and Learning Progressions</i> by Lucy Calkins and Audra Kirshbaum Robb and Colleagues from the Teachers College of Reading and Writing Project. • <i>Independent Writing</i> by Colleen Cruz CD-ROM for Informational Writing included in the Units of Study. Assessment: • Writers Response Notebook entries • Individual Conferring • Small group book club conversations • Final Projects (Possibilities are endless but might include; a quick literary essay explaining their connection to a particular book or a particular author, letter to upcoming 6th grader, how-to pamphlets for video games, illustrated cookbooks, graduation acknowledgement speech, etc.

Bibliography

*Quotations and citations were not specifically referenced in the curriculum document, but much credit should be given to The Reading and Writing Project and Lucy Calkins, as well as her colleagues. Our curriculum document would not be possible without the thinking and research of this organization.

Units of Study in Argument, Information, and Narrative Writing Written by Lucy Calkins with Colleagues from The Reading and Writing Project

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