

6th Grade

English Language Arts

Key Instructional Activities

- Analyzing how chapters of a book, scenes of a play, or stanzas of a poem fit into the overall structure of the piece and contribute to the development of themes or ideas
- Determining the theme of a text and how the author conveys that theme
- Describing how a narrative unfolds and how characters are developed across the text
- Using a range of reading strategies to determine the correct meaning of a word based on the context in which it is used
- Comparing and contrasting a variety of texts such as poems, stories, historical fiction
- Identifying and evaluating specific claims or arguments in a text
- Presenting claims and findings to others orally, sequencing ideas logically, and accentuating main ideas or themes
- Writing arguments that provide clear reasons and relevant evidence supported by citations from credible sources
- Writing brief informational reports that examine a topic, have a clear focus, and include relevant facts, details, and quotations
- Writing narratives that develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences
- Producing clear and coherent writing appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience
- Participating in discussions about various texts and topics
- Reviewing and paraphrasing key ideas and multiple perspectives of a speaker
- Conducting short research projects to answer a question, drawing on multiple sources

In addition to stories and literature, today's 6th grader will read more texts that provide facts and background knowledge in areas including science and social studies. They will read more challenging texts and be asked more questions that will require them to refer back to what they have read. There will also be an increased emphasis on building a strong vocabulary so that students can read and understand challenging material.



HOUSTON COUNTY
BOARD OF EDUCATION
HIGH-ACHIEVING STUDENTS

By the end of 6th grade, all students are expected to:

- *Use words, patterns in words, and word meanings to read fluently and comprehend effectively;*
- *Apply grade-appropriate language skills in writing;*
- *Self-monitor to correct errors when reading and writing;*
- *Talk with and listen to peers about one's reading and writing to become lifelong readers and writers; and*
- *Use reading and writing to communicate through listening, speaking, and viewing.*

Helping Your Student in 6th Grade ELA

Learning does not end in the classroom. Students need help and support at home to succeed in their studies. Try to create a quiet place for your student to study, and carve out time every day when your student can concentrate on reading and writing uninterrupted by friends, brothers or sisters, or other distractions. Sit down with your student at least once a week for 15 to 30 minutes while he or she works on homework. This will keep you informed about what your student is working on, and it will help you be the first to know if your student needs help with specific topics. By taking these small steps, you will be helping your student become successful both in and outside the classroom.

- Read, read, read! The amount your student reads independently is directly connected to his or her success in school.
- Listen with your student to a television reporter, politician, or other speaker. Ask your student to tell you the speaker's main points. Was the speaker trying to convince the audience of something? How?
- Visit a library or bookstore together and ask the librarian or bookseller to recommend young adult books. To find popular young adult books for your student to read, visit <https://tinyurl.com/y3rjcelh>.
- Make time for conversation at home. Discuss current events, shared interests, and future aspirations for education and career.
- Invite your student to participate in an adult gathering, such as a meal with friends, to practice listening skills and making conversation.
- Practice determining meanings of unknown words when you encounter them in written texts, television shows, radio, etc.
- Provide time and space for your student to read independently. This time should be free from distractions such as television.
- Ask your student what topics, events, or activities he or she likes. Then look for books, magazines, or other materials about those topics that would motivate your student to read.
- It is also helpful when your student sees other people reading at home. You could share what you have read.
- Visit museums, zoos, theaters, historical sites, aquariums, and other educational places to help increase your student's exposure to new knowledge and vocabulary.
- Use technology to help build your student's interest in reading. There are several websites where students can read books or articles online. The computer will help with words the student cannot read independently. Libraries also have computers students can use to access those sites. Feel free to ask a librarian or teacher for suggestions.



6th ELA System Pacing Overview



This guide provides an overview of what your student will learn in his or her 6th Grade English Language Arts course. It focuses on the key skills your student will learn, which will build a strong foundation for success in the other subjects studied throughout middle school. This guide is based on the state-adopted Georgia Standards of Excellence.

August - October

Reading Focus: Analyzing Characters

Writing Focus: Narrative

Performance Goal: Developing a narrative essay

This unit helps engage students with close reading, gathering text evidence, and weighing and evaluating multiple theories about complex characters. Students will also learn to consider more complex character traits, to investigate how setting shapes characters, and to analyze how characters are vehicles for themes.

- Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- Determine a theme and/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.
- Describe how a text's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves towards a resolution.
- 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.
- 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.
- Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.

This unit focuses on teaching writers to write with focus and detail, how to craft leads and conclusions, and how to use transitions and precise language effectively. Students rely on techniques for narrative writing such as dialogue, inner thinking, precise actions, and setting details to develop the important parts of a story.

- Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

October - December

Reading Focus: Social Issues Book Clubs

Writing Focus: Literary Essay

Performance Goal: Developing a literary essay

Reading literature has proven to increase people's ability to empathize with others, and to be more socially aware. A driving force in this unit is the power of reading to transform how we see others and to show us new ways to be kind, to connect, and to stand up for what's right.

- Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- Determine a theme and/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.
- 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 towards a resolution.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

In this unit, students read texts closely and write as a way to elaborate on their thinking. They practice thinking about big concepts such as character and theme, making them stronger readers as they learn to name their ideas and back them up with evidence. They learn to evaluate the strength of the evidence they are using, to write it with voice and clarity, and to incorporate quotes with precision.

- Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- 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.
- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
- Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases.
- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

January - March	
Reading Focus: Complex Nonfiction Texts	Writing Focus: Research-Based Informational Texts
Performance Goal: Developing an informational essay	
<p>Across this unit, students develop nonfiction reading skills: discerning central ideas, summarizing to create a concise version of a text, synthesizing within and across texts, building vocabulary, growing ideas, and reading critically to question the author's point of view and perspective. They'll also learn to develop flexibility as they read across text types, reading a variety of nonfiction chapter books, articles, trade books, and online resources, and transferring what they know from one text type to the next.</p>	<p>This unit aims to strengthen students' ability to take large amounts of information and not only synthesize and critique it, but also to find ways to improve it and explain it to others. As part of their research and writing, students will use an array of informational texts, create a logical and clear structure for their writing, incorporate cited quotations, and adopt an appropriate tone and style.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. • 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. • Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes). • Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings. • 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. • Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text. • 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content. • Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. • Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach. • Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate. • 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. • Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

April	
Reading Focus: Fantasy Book Clubs and High-Leverage Assessment Strategies	Writing Focus: Fantasy Writing and High-Leverage Assessment Strategies
Performance Goal: Reading and Writing Strategies for Assessment	
<p>Across this unit, students will have opportunities to practice all of the high-leverage reading strategies they have learned throughout the year. A focus will be on flexibly using those strategies across a variety of text types and genres.</p>	<p>Across this unit, students will have opportunities to practice all of the high-leverage writing strategies they have learned throughout the year. A focus will be on flexibly using those strategies across a variety of text types and genres.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. • Determine a theme and/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. • 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 towards a resolution. • 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. • 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. • 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences. • Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. • 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.

May	
Nonfiction Author and Craft Study	Moving from Persuasion to Argument
Performance Goal: Developing a literary essay	
<p>In this unit, students will read nonfiction in research clubs, reading text sets of social issues and/other debatable issues. Emphasis is placed on transferring from persuasion skills to argument skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. • 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. • Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text. • Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings. • 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. • Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text. • 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. • Compare and contrast one author's presentation of events with that of another. 	<p>This unit supports students in getting better at writing logical, compelling, and persuasive arguments about topics that feel relevant to them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. • Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content. • Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. • 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. • Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate. • 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. • Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. • Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.