

LANGUAGE ARTS CONTENT STANDARDS GRADE 6

READING

Students use their knowledge of word origins and word relationships, as well as historical and literary context clues, to determine the meaning of specialized vocabulary and to understand the precise meaning of grade-level-appropriate words. Students read and understand grade-level-appropriate material. They describe and connect the essential ideas, arguments, and perspectives of the text by using their knowledge of text structure, organization, and purpose. Students read and respond to historically or culturally significant works of literature that reflect and enhance their studies of history and social science. They clarify the ideas and connect them to other literary works.

WORD ANALYSIS, FLUENCY, AND SYSTEMATIC VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT: The standards for word analysis, fluency, and systematic vocabulary development are a key part of development in fourth through sixth grades. Skillful and fluent decoding is of fundamental importance to reading comprehension. A primary focus in these grades is having students learn words and concepts. Students study the origins, derivations, and use of words over time and in different types of text. Although extensive independent reading is the primary means of increasing vocabulary knowledge, children continue to need direct instruction in word-learning strategies to develop their vocabularies and enhance their ability to learn new words while reading.

Vocabulary knowledge is a direct result of how much a student reads. The more a student reads, the more the vocabulary knowledge increases. For example, students who read one-half million to one million words of running text generally learn approximately 3,000 words per year.

Word Recognition

- **Read narrative and expository text aloud with fluency and accuracy, and with appropriate pacing, intonation, and expression.**

Vocabulary and Concept Development

- Distinguish and interpret figurative language and multiple-meaning words.
- Recognize the origins and meanings of frequently used foreign words in English and use these words accurately in speaking and writing.
- **Monitor expository text for unknown words or words with novel meanings, using word, sentence and paragraph clues to determine meaning.**
- Understand and explain "shades of meaning" for related words (e.g., softly and quietly).

READING COMPREHENSION (Focus on Informational Materials): In the upper elementary grades the standards focus primarily on the structural features of informational text. In fourth grade students learn to look at text patterns such as compare and contrast; central focus or theme; and use of facts, details, and examples. These fundamentals are then incorporated across other grade levels.

Structural Features of Informational Materials

- Identify and use the structural features of, and differences among, newspapers, magazines, and editorials to gain meaning from text.
- Analyze text which uses compare-and-contrast patterns.

Comprehension and Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text

- **Connect and clarify main ideas, identifying their relationship to other sources and related topics.**
- **Clarify understanding of texts by creating outlines, logical notes, summaries, or reports.**
- Follow multiple-step instructions for preparing applications (e.g., public library card, bank savings account, sports club, or league membership form).

Expository Critique

- **Determine the adequacy and appropriateness of an author's evidence for his or her conclusions.**
- **Make reasonable assertions about text through accurate, supportive citations.**
- Note instances of unsupported inferences, fallacious reasoning, persuasion, and propaganda in text.

LITERARY RESPONSE AND ANALYSIS: Students continue to learn about fundamental elements of literature that will allow them to appreciate the rich quality and complexity of materials they read. Through the upper elementary grades students identify and analyze a wide variety of literary forms such as poetry, drama, myths and fables. Students learn to understand the complex elements of plot and evaluate patterns and literary techniques that influence the readers' perspectives.

Structural Features of Literature

- Distinguish among forms of fiction and describe the major characteristics of each form.

Narrative Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text

- **Analyze how the qualities of the character (e.g., courage or cowardice, ambition or laziness) affect the plot and resolution of the conflict.**
- Analyze the influence of setting on the problem and its resolution.
- **Define how tone or meaning is conveyed in poetry through word choice, figurative language, sentence structure, line length, punctuation, rhythm, repetition, and rhyme.**
- Identify the speaker and recognize the difference between first and third person narration (e.g., autobiography versus biography).
- **Identify and analyze features of themes conveyed through characters, actions, and images.**
- Explain the effects of key literary devices in a variety of fictional and non-fictional texts (e.g., symbolism, imagery, metaphor).

Literary Criticism

- Critique the credibility of characterization and the degree to which a plot is contrived or realistic (e.g., compare use of fact and fantasy in historical fiction) (Reader Response).

WRITING

Students write clear, coherent, and focused essays. The writing exhibits the students' awareness of the audience and purpose. Essays contain formal introductions, supporting evidence, and conclusions. Students progress through the stages of the writing process as needed. They write narrative, expository, persuasive, and descriptive texts of at least 500 to 700 words in each genre. Student writing demonstrates a command of standard American English and the drafting, research, and organizational strategies outlined in Writing Standard 1.0.

WRITING STRATEGIES AND APPLICATIONS: Students continue to use all stages of the writing process, but the standards specifically address revising and editing. They are expected to create multiple-paragraph narrative and expository compositions and use traditional structures (e.g., chronological order, cause and effect, etc.) for conveying information. It also assumes that students can select a focus, organizational structure, and point of view based on purpose, audience, and format. The standards begin to make use of the research process and a variety of learning resources and technologies in the school library, classrooms, the community, and the home as tools and strategies for preparing various types of documents, reports, and presentations. Writing applications are extended in a full range of text structures, including biographies, short stories, responses to literature, research reports, and persuasive compositions.

WRITING STRATEGIES:

Organization and Focus

- **Choose the form of writing** (e.g., personal letter, letter to the editor, review, poem, report, narrative) **that best suits the intended purpose.**
- **Create multiple-paragraph expository compositions:**
 - a. Engage the interest of the reader and state a clear purpose.
 - b. Develop the topic with supporting details and precise verbs, nouns, and adjectives to paint a visual image in the mind of the reader.
 - c. Conclude with a detailed summary linked to the purpose of the composition.
- **Use a variety of effective and coherent organizational patterns**, including comparison and contrast; organization by categories; and arrangement by spatial order, order of importance, or climactic order.

Research and Technology

- **Use organizational features of electronic text** (e.g., bulletin boards, databases, keyword searches, e-mail addresses) **to locate information.**
- **Compose documents with appropriate formatting by using word- processing skills and principles of design** (e.g., margins, tabs, spacing, columns, page orientation).

Revising and Evaluating Writing

- **Revise writing to improve organization and consistency of ideas within and between paragraphs.**

WRITING APPLICATIONS (GENRES AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS):

Using the Grade 6 writing strategies outlined in Writing Standard 1.0, students:

- **Write narratives:**
 - a. Establish and develop a plot and setting and present a point of view that is appropriate to the stories.
 - b. Include sensory details and concrete language to develop plot and character.
 - c. Use a range of narrative devices (e.g., dialogue, suspense).
- **Write expository compositions (e.g., description, explanation, comparison and contrast, problem and solution):**
 - a. State the thesis or purpose.
 - b. Explain the situation.
 - c. Follow an organizational pattern appropriate to the type of composition.
 - d. Offer persuasive evidence to validate arguments and conclusions as needed.
- **Write research reports:**
 - a. Pose relevant questions with a scope narrow enough to be thoroughly covered.
 - b. Support the main idea or ideas with facts, details, examples, and explanations from multiple authoritative sources (e.g., speakers, periodicals, online information searches).
 - c. Include a bibliography.
- **Write responses to literature:**
 - a. Develop an interpretation exhibiting careful reading, understanding, and insight.
 - b. Organize the interpretation around several clear ideas, premises, or images.
 - c. Develop and justify the interpretation through sustained use of examples and textual evidence.
- **Write persuasive compositions:**
 - a. State a clear position on a proposition or proposal.
 - b. Support the position with organized and relevant evidence.
 - c. Anticipate and address reader concerns and counterarguments.

WRITTEN AND ORAL ENGLISH-LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS

Students write and speak with a command of standard English conventions that are appropriate to this grade level.

WRITTEN AND ORAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS: Students are expected to have a command of the English-language conventions, including sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

Sentence Structure

- Identify and use present perfect, past perfect, and future perfect tenses; subject-verb agreement with compound subjects; and indefinite pronouns.

Punctuation

- Use colons in business letters, semi-colons to connect independent clauses, and commas when linking two clauses with a conjunction in compound sentences.

Capitalization

- Use correct capitalization.

Spelling

- Spell frequently misspelled words correctly (e.g., their, they're, there).

LISTENING AND SPEAKING

Students deliver focused, coherent presentations that convey ideas clearly and relate to the background and interests of the audience. They evaluate the content of oral communication. They deliver well-organized formal presentations employing traditional rhetorical strategies (e.g., narration, exposition, persuasion, description). Student speaking demonstrates a command of standard American English and the organization and delivery strategies outlined in Listening and Speaking Standard 1.

LISTENING AND SPEAKING STRATEGIES: In the upper elementary grades, listening strategies require that students ask thoughtful questions, summarize major ideas, use supporting evidence to substantiate conclusions, and identify how language usages reflect regional and cultural differences. During their delivery of oral communications, students are expected to present effective introductions and conclusions; use traditional structures for conveying information. They are expected to analyze news media with increasing sophistication and ability.

Comprehension

- Relate the speaker's verbal communication (e.g., word choice, pitch, feeling, tone) and non-verbal messages (e.g., posture, gesture).
- Identify the tone, mood, and emotion conveyed in the oral communication.
- **Restate and execute multi-step oral instructions and directions.**

Organization and Delivery of Oral Communication

- **Select a focus, organizational structure, and point of view, matching purpose, message, occasion, and vocal modulation to the audience.**
- Emphasize salient points to assist the listener in following main ideas and concepts.
- Support opinions expressed with detailed evidence and with visual or media displays that use appropriate technology.
- Use effective rate, volume, pitch, and tone, and align non-verbal elements to sustain audience interest and attention.

Analysis and Evaluation of Oral and Media Communications

- Analyze the use of rhetorical devices for their intent and effects (e.g., cadence, repetitive patterns, use of onomatopoeia).
- **Identify persuasive and propaganda techniques used in television, and identify false and misleading information.**

SPEAKING APPLICATIONS (GENRES AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS): Students are expected to use speaking strategies to deliver narrative and informative presentations. They should demonstrate their ability to relate ideas, frame a key question, establish a controlling idea or topic, and summarize. They should use clear diction, tempo, volume and phrasing.

Using the Grade 6 speaking strategies outlined in Listening and Speaking Standard 1.0, students:

- Deliver narrative presentations:
 - a. Establish a context, plot, and point of view.
 - b. Include sensory details and concrete language to develop the plot and character.
 - c. Use a range of narrative devices (e.g., dialogue, tension, or suspense).
- **Deliver informative presentations:**
 - a. Pose relevant questions sufficiently limited in scope to be completely and thoroughly answered.
 - b. Develop the topic with facts, details, examples, and explanations from multiple authoritative sources (e.g., speakers, periodicals, online information).
- Deliver oral responses to literature:
 - a. Develop an interpretation exhibiting careful reading, understanding, and insight.
 - b. Organize the selected interpretation around several clear ideas, premises, or images.
 - c. Develop and justify the selected interpretation through sustained use of examples and textual evidence.
- **Deliver persuasive presentations:**
 - a. Provide a clear statement of the position.
 - b. Include relevant evidence.
 - c. Offer a logical sequence of information.
 - d. Engage the listener and foster acceptance of the proposition or proposal.
- **Deliver presentations on problems and solutions:**
 - a. Theorize on the causes and effects of each problem and establish connections between the defined problem and at least one solution.
 - b. Offer persuasive evidence to validate the definition of the problem and the proposed solutions.