



A Look at...

Sixth Grade in California Public Schools

Including information about the new
Common Core State Standards



STANDARDS, CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS AND INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES DIVISION
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Sixth-grade Curriculum



What will my child learn in sixth grade?

I've been teaching second grade, and this year I've been reassigned to sixth grade. What does the sixth-grade curriculum look like?

I'm the principal of a small private elementary school, and I want to be sure my students are meeting the state's standards. How can I find out what students are expected to learn at each grade?

The state just adopted Common Core State Standards for English language arts and mathematics. How will the new standards enhance curriculum in sixth grade?

This chapter is organized by sections for each subject describing what students should know and be able to do by the end of sixth grade. Each section includes a brief overview of what the student should have learned before entering sixth grade, followed by a narrative description of the sixth-grade standards. Each subject concludes with a list of the sixth-grade standards for that content area, including the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS), with California additions, for English language arts and mathematics.

If you are interested in a more in-depth discussion of each subject, please consult the state-adopted curriculum frameworks for kindergarten through grade twelve. These documents are on the CDE Curriculum and Instruction Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/allfwks.asp>.



Overview

Students in sixth grade focus on active engagement with text. They are required to analyze, identify, define, explain, integrate, evaluate, compare, contrast, and cite supportive evidence – developing and building upon those skills that were required in fifth grade. Deeper analysis of literature and informational text continues to be the focus of sixth-grade instruction, although reading fluently and accurately remains a goal for all students. Students’ understanding of the precise meaning of words, English language conventions, structural features of informational text and materials, and fundamental elements of literature all support greater comprehension of what they read, see, and hear.

Standards-based instruction is a critical element to develop students’ literacy and proficiency in English language arts.

Standards-based instruction is a critical element to develop students’ literacy and proficiency in English language arts. The standards describe what students are expected to know and be able to do by the end of the school year. California recently adopted new standards in English language arts: the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), with California additions. The CCSS integrates the strands of English language arts: Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language. The new standards will be implemented gradually over the next several years as curriculum frameworks, instructional materials, and assessments based on the CCSS are adopted.

There are many similarities between the CCSS and the 1997 California English language arts standards, but there are also some notable differences. For instance, in the CCSS, the standards in sixth grade are divided into strands: Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language. In the 1997 California English language arts standards, the standards are organized around domains: Reading, Writing, Written and Oral English Language Conventions, and Listening and Speaking. An organizational change in the CCSS for grades 6–12 is the inclusion of another set of standards: Reading and Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects. These standards are not intended to replace existing standards in those content areas, but meant to supplement instruction and provide consistency in expectations across the curriculum.

This section provides an overview of the new CCSS for sixth-grade English language arts. It includes a review of the important English language arts skills and concepts from fifth grade (prerequisite skills) and guidance to ensure success for English learners. A complete list of the grade-six CCSS for English language arts, with California additions, can be found at the end of this section. A complete list of the grade-six 1997 California English language arts standards is located on the CDE Content Standards Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/documents/elacontentstnds.pdf>.

What Sixth-Grade Students Should Know

In fifth grade, students read and analyzed a variety of historical and culturally significant works of literature and focused more attention on comprehension of complex and narrative texts. Students read grade-level text fluently and accurately and mastered foundational reading skills in preparation for sixth grade and beyond. (Fifth grade is the last grade in which the CCSS include specific standards in foundational reading skills.) Students analyzed how structure, point of view, visual elements, and figurative language contribute to the meaning or tone of text. They expanded their comprehension and analysis skills to compare, contrast, and integrate information from two or more texts; determined the theme or thesis; and used details and supporting evidence from the text to draw conclusions.

Students learned academic language and domain-specific vocabulary through their reading and used it in their writing and speaking. In writing, students learned to group related information logically; used words,

phrases, and clauses to link opinions to reasons and ideas to related ideas; and incorporated narrative techniques to develop a storyline or characters. They wrote in both extended and short time frames for a range of content-specific tasks, purposes, and audience. Technology played a larger role in students' production and publishing of writing. Students also used technology to gather information for research projects and interact or collaborate with others.

In fifth grade, students engaged effectively in collaborative conversations, identified and analyzed logical fallacies in speakers' presentations or from media sources, and learned to plan and deliver presentations. They incorporated conventions of standard English grammar and usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling to support their speaking and writing.

What Students Learn in Sixth Grade

Students read and analyze a wide range of literature from different times and cultures, with an increasing emphasis on analyzing informational text on grade-level topics in all sixth-grade subject areas. The emphasis in sixth grade is on students' comprehension of complex narrative and informational texts. Students read two or more texts on a topic and use a variety of comprehension strategies to compare, contrast, and integrate information from the texts. They analyze how structure, point of view, visual elements, and figurative language contribute to the meaning or tone of texts. As their analysis skills deepen, students can identify key individual events and details and use them as evidence to support their analysis and to distinguish claims that are supported by an author from those that are not. Additional analysis skills call for students to compare and contrast one author's presentation of events to another interpretation. They learn academic language and domain-specific vocabulary through their reading and use it in their writing and speaking.



In their writing, students in sixth grade develop more sophisticated skills, such as using a cohesive organization of ideas and drawing evidence from a variety of sources to support their purpose or conclusion. They revise, edit, and rewrite their compositions and learn to try new approaches and use technology to improve their writing product. Students conduct research projects that provide them with practice in gathering information, using print and digital sources, and paraphrasing or summarizing information. Integrating reading and writing across the different content areas is emphasized through the addition of the standards for literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects.

Students engage effectively in collaborative conversations with diverse partners and in different groupings on sixth-grade topics and texts, can identify and analyze logical fallacies in speakers' presentations or from media sources. They learn to present an argument and support it with a logical sequence of evidence. They also learn to use expression and nonverbal elements for effect and to engage the audience. To support their writing and speaking, they learn conventions of standard English grammar and usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling, such as using commas to set off parenthetical clauses. In sixth grade, the proper use of pronouns is emphasized. Developing academic as well as domain-specific vocabulary is highlighted. Students learn to distinguish between words with similar meanings and to use common affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of words. They also use the relationships between certain words (e.g., cause/effect or part/whole) to help understand each word.

Reading

The following section is organized according to the two major components of the reading standards: reading standards for literature and reading standards for informational text.

Reading Standards for Literature

Students in sixth grade read and analyze a wide range of literature, selected from different periods and cultures, including stories, drama, and poetry. In both the 1997 California English language arts standards and the CCSS, students analyze the structures and elements of literary works in order to comprehend the texts. The CCSS extend comprehension by having students compare and contrast reading a piece of literature to listening to or watching an audio, video, or live version of the text. In addition, students compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres in relationship to their different approaches to similar themes or topics. Both the 1997 standards and the CCSS ask students to identify a central idea or theme, using supporting evidence and details. Adding to those skills, the CCSS call for students to analyze how a certain sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot. Students must also provide a summary of the text without including their personal opinion.

There are similar word analysis standards in the 1997 California English language arts standards and the CCSS. For example, students understand figurative language and similar or related words as they are used in text. Although recognition of frequently used foreign words is unique to the 1997 standards, this practice may continue in the CCSS as students analyze the impact of a specific word on meaning and tone.

Reading Standards for Informational Text

By sixth grade, over 50 percent of reading time and activities should focus on informational text. As students face increased reading demands in all sixth-grade content areas, improved comprehension becomes critical to their academic success.

By sixth grade, over 50 percent of reading time and activities should focus on informational text.

In both the 1997 California English language arts standards and the CCSS, students use their knowledge of text structure, organization, and purpose to comprehend essential ideas and integrate information from different formats and types of text. They identify key individual events and details as evidence to support analysis of what the text says. Students learn to evaluate if an author's conclusion is supported by evidence, or conclusions that are not.

The CCSS emphasize additional analysis skills that call for students to compare and contrast one author's presentation of events to another interpretation – such as a personal diary by and a biography of the same person. To aid in the comprehension of text, the 1997 California English language arts standards call for students to connect main ideas based on their relationship to other sources and topics. The CCSS extend this skill by asking students to integrate information presented in different media or formats, such as in charts or graphs, as well as in words, to clarify the understanding of a topic. To support their comprehension of texts on sixth-grade topics in all subject areas, students determine the meaning of words and phrases, including content-related vocabulary, or words with technical meanings.

Writing

Students in sixth grade demonstrate sophisticated writing skills from their use of specific vocabulary and syntax to a more cohesive organization of ideas that incorporate a range of content and a variety of sources. Their writing demonstrates a command of the conventions of the English language, familiarity with organizational features, and a clear style of writing appropriate for an identified purpose and audience, and experience with the stages of the writing process (e.g., pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing). Students use technology to compose and publish documents and to find resources and gather information to support their main idea.

Both the 1997 California English language arts standards and the CCSS call for students in sixth grade to write multiple-paragraph texts with a central idea or theme, relevant supporting details, the use of precise words and visual imagery, and a conclusion. The purposes of writing that students produce are similar under each set of standards. Students write responses to literature, persuasive compositions, research reports, expository compositions, and narratives using the 1997 California English language arts standards.

The CCSS for writing arguments and informative/explanatory pieces delineate more detail to the expectations. They also write routinely in both extended and short time frames for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences. In their arguments, they clearly organize the reasons and relevant evidence, and support claims with credible sources. For informative/explanatory texts, students use an extended array of organizational strategies to aid comprehension: definition, classification, compare/contrast, cause/effect, graphics, and multimedia resources. Under the CCSS, a response to literature writing piece, depending on its purpose, could be considered an example of an informative or an opinion piece. In their narrative writing, students learn how to organize events so the sequence unfolds naturally and use transition words and phrases for sequencing and shifting from one time frame to another. Narrative techniques such as dialogue, description, and pacing to develop characters and plot are incorporated.

Technology, including the Internet, plays a larger role in the CCSS. Students use technology in the production of writing, to interact and collaborate with others, and to conduct short research projects to answer a specific question. In sixth grade, students demonstrate a sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type at least three pages in a single sitting. Students also learn how to obtain information from both digital sources and print sources, summarize or paraphrase data or the conclusions of others (avoiding plagiarism), and provide bibliographic information for their sources.



Speaking and Listening

Students in sixth grade listen critically to speakers and media presentations, identify and interpret information from a variety of media and formats, deliver presentations, and ask questions to gain additional information. In their oral presentations, they use the structures found in the literature and informational text they read and in their own writing (e.g., a central idea or theme supported by facts, descriptive details, or observations). Students apply the same conventions of standard English when speaking that they use in their writing.

Both the 1997 California English language arts standards and the CCSS focus on students' listening and comprehension skills and their formal oral presentation skills. Students identify and analyze logical fallacies in a speaker's presentation or from a media source. When they present claims for findings, they sequence ideas logically, use appropriate facts and relevant details to support the main idea or theme, and speak clearly. They learn to use nonverbal elements to accentuate main ideas and themes and to use appropriate eye contact.

There are notable differences between the 1997 California English language arts standards and the CCSS. The 1997 California English language arts standards focus on analyzing oral presentations and media communications. For example, the 1997 California English language arts standards ask students to relate a speaker's verbal communication with the nonverbal message, analyze the use of rhetorical devices, identify persuasive and propaganda techniques, and follow or restate multiple-step oral directions.

The CCSS emphasize collaborative discussions on sixth-grade topics and texts with diverse partners and in different groupings (one-on-one, in groups, or teacher-led). In these discussions, students come prepared to add to the discussion by referencing evidence reflecting ideas being discussed. Students follow rules for collegial discussions with specific goals, deadlines, and individual roles. They make comments that contribute to the discussion and elaborate on the remarks of others, pose or respond to questions, and demonstrate understanding of a variety of viewpoints through reflection and paraphrasing.

Media as a source of information and a complement to oral presentations is another focus of the CCSS. Students in sixth grade interpret information presented in diverse media and formats, (e.g., visual, quantitative, oral) and explain its contribution to the topic. They also can distinguish a speaker's argument that is supported by reasons from claims that are not. Multimedia components (e.g., graphics, images, music, sound) and visual displays are used to clarify information in their presentations. Students learn to adapt their speech to a variety of contexts and tasks and are able to use formal English when it is appropriate.

Language

Students in sixth grade continue to build on previous language skills initiated in earlier grades, and are introduced to new rules for grammar and usage and punctuation. The specific rules or conventions they learn vary between the 1997 California English language arts standards and the CCSS. Students use their knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, listening, and reading.

Both sets of standards call for students to vary sentence patterns to promote understanding and expression. In punctuation, under the 1997 California standards, students begin to use colons and semicolons, a skill which appears later in the CCSS. Under the CCSS, students begin to use punctuation marks (i.e., commas, dashes, parentheses) to set off parenthetical clauses. Also, students learn how to recognize variations from standard English in their own writing and speaking, as well as in others.

The use of pronouns is emphasized in both the CCSS and the 1997 English language arts standards; the CCSS are more specific in types and usage. Students learn to use all types of pronouns properly, to recognize and correct shifts in pronoun number or person, to correct vague pronouns, and ensure pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, possessive).

In the 1997 California English language arts standards, vocabulary development standards are found in the reading strand. In the CCSS, standards for vocabulary acquisition and use are found in the language strand. Both the 1997 California English language arts standards and the CCSS cover a range of strategies for vocabulary acquisition, though in sixth grade independent reading is the primary means by which students increase their vocabulary. Under both sets of standards, students choose from a range of strategies to determine the meaning of words. Students understand and can explain figurative language and can distinguish among words with similar means (e.g., stingy, scrimping, thrifty). In addition, the CCSS emphasize using relationships between certain words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole) to better understand words. Using common Greek or Latin affixes and roots for clues to word meanings is included as part of the CCSS in sixth grade, but was introduced in fourth grade in the 1997 standards.

The CCSS emphasize students' use of both print and digital reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses) to pronounce words and clarify the precise meaning of key words or part of speech.

Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Unique to the CCSS in grades 6–12 is the addition of standards for literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects. (In kindergarten through grade five, the standards for literacy are embedded within the four strands of the standards.) The addition of these standards for literacy recognizes the role English language arts teachers play in developing students' literacy skills while clarifying that teachers in other content areas also share that responsibility. The standards for literacy recognize the need for students to be proficient in reading complex informational text and writing persuasive and explanatory text on discipline-specific content.

In the CCSS, the standards for literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects focus on reading and writing and are divided into three parts – reading standards for literacy in history/social studies; reading standards for literacy in science and technical subjects; and writing standards for literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects. Standards in each part are organized into grade bands (6–8, 9–10, and 11–12) and follow the same set of anchor standards used in English language arts.

The shared responsibility of developing reading and writing across all content areas is not a new topic of discussion. Over the past 15 years, California's content standards and frameworks have advocated and supported teachers sharing the responsibility to develop student literacy. For example, a number of guiding principles from the *Science Framework for California Public Schools* identify that effective science programs: (1) use standards-based connections with other core subjects to reinforce science teaching and learning, (2)

The addition of these standards for literacy recognizes the role English language arts teachers play in developing students' literacy skills while clarifying that teachers in other content areas also share that responsibility.

develop students' command of academic language, and (3) use technology to teach students, assess their knowledge, develop information resources, and enhance computer literacy. California's history-social science standards include historical and social science analysis skills. Examples of the skills from grades six through eight include: (1) students frame questions that can be answered by historical study and research; (2) students distinguish fact from opinion in historical narratives and stories; and (3) students understand and distinguish cause, effect, sequence, and correlation in historical events, including the long- and short-term causal relations.

These same skills are identified in the CCSS reading standards in history/social studies and science and technical subjects. The CCSS emphasize the need to use specific textual evidence to support analysis of text and comparing and contrasting information gained from different sources (i.e., primary versus secondary sources or doing an experiment versus reading about it). The CCSS highlight the importance of determining the meaning of content-related or domain-specific words as they are used in specific historical or scientific context.

As noted in the English language arts writing section above, the writing standards for literacy in CCSS extend the types of writing from the 1997 standards. Students are expected to write arguments based on discipline-specific content, supporting the topic with relevant and accurate data and evidence. Informative or explanatory texts could include writing about a scientific procedure or retelling an historical event. All students writing should be well-organized and developed using key facts or details. Students are expected to conduct research projects to answer a specific question, paraphrase or summarize others work without plagiarizing, and to write consistently within both short and extended time frames.

Extra Support for Struggling Readers

By the end of sixth grade, students are expected to be fluent and independent readers who engage in the analysis of literature and informational text. Students who are not proficient in word-analysis skills are likely to experience academic difficulties. Early screening and intervention address specific areas of instruction in a timely manner. Struggling readers—any students experiencing difficulty learning to read, which may include those who use nonstandard English, English learners, and students with disabilities—should be provided with additional support to become proficient in sixth-grade reading skills. Instructional support for students should include:

Students who are not proficient in word analysis skills are likely to experience academic difficulties.

- flexible groupings for differentiated instruction;
- pre-teaching of key skills, strategies, and concepts;
- intensive, explicit instruction in decoding and word-recognition skills which may include materials at the reading level of students;
- pre-teaching and re-teaching the use of Greek and Latin affixes and roots as clues to determine meaning of unknown words;
- additional explicit direct instruction in using informational text to analyze overall text structure and features;
- additional explicit direct instruction in using informational text to cite evidence as required in text analysis;
- direct, explicit instruction in language development to address grammatical structures of oral and written standard English;

- vocabulary instruction embedded in context, including academic language and domain-specific vocabulary;
- building background knowledge;
- reinforcing and extending the regular classroom program.

For those students whose reading achievement is two or more years below grade level, placement in an Intensive Intervention Program in Reading/Language Arts should be considered. These intensive, stand-alone, accelerated programs are specifically designed to address the instructional needs of students in grades four through eight whose reading achievement is two or more years below grade level. (For additional information on state-adopted intensive intervention programs, see Chapter 9 of the *Reading/Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools* and the list of adopted instructional materials on the CDE Reading/Language Arts Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/rl/im/rladoptedlist.asp>.)

Support for English Learners

English-language development (ELD) is a critical component of the language arts program for English learners and comes with direct, explicit, and systematic instruction in reading and writing. Instructional programs for English learners should be planned according to the students' assessed level of literacy (reading and writing) in English and their primary language as well as their proficiency in English (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Students with strong literacy skills in their primary language are at an advantage. They can concentrate on learning English rather than on receiving initial instruction in reading and writing.

Students in sixth grade are expected to conduct deep analysis of literature and informational text on grade-level topics in all subject areas. English learners benefit from pre-teaching as they learn how to analyze the structure of informational text and how text features contribute to the development of the ideas in text. With guided instruction, students will also learn how to cite evidence to support their statements in their text analysis.

When provided with differentiated instruction using informational text, English learners can acquire and practice using academic language as well as domain-specific words in different content areas.

As English learners participate and engage in collaborative discussions, they are given ample opportunities to hear vocabulary acquired from their reading, and can practice using this vocabulary by expressing themselves during one-on-one, small group, or teacher-led discussions.

Providing explicit writing instruction on how to write research reports, as well as models of research reports, will expand English learners writing skills. Students develop as writers by receiving close guidance in organization, searching for appropriate reference materials, incorporating and correctly using quotations and citations, and revising their research reports. Because English learners are still developing proficiency in English, students gain from receiving positive corrective teacher feedback on their writing and grammatical errors. English learners may need additional time and practice in writing for a variety of purposes and audiences to further their writing abilities.

English learners develop oral and written language through formal linguistic instruction that includes learning common phrases, idiomatic expressions, and language patterns as well as phonological, morphological, syntactical, and semantic structures of English.

Explicit instruction on grammatical rules and functions of pronouns help students use pronouns correctly, including intensive pronouns (e.g. myself, ourselves). Students may need additional instructional support to

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recognize and correct their own errors in pronoun use. They are provided with multiple opportunities to practice these skills in both speaking and writing and receive corrective teacher feedback. (For a more extensive list of grammatical conventions, refer to the “Transition to Common Core State Standards: Planning ELD Instruction” chart that follows.)

For those students whose academic achievement is two or more years below grade level, placement in an Intensive Intervention Program for English Learners should be considered. These stand-alone, intensive, accelerated programs are specifically designed for English learners in grades four through eight whose academic achievement is two or more years below grade level. (For additional information on state-adopted intensive intervention programs for English Learners, see Chapter 9 of the *Reading/Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools* and the list of adopted instructional materials on the CDE Reading/Language Arts Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/rl/im/rladoptedlist.asp>.)

Specially designed academic instruction in English (SDAIE) is one valuable instructional strategy to meet the needs of English learners. For additional resources to support the teaching of English learners, please visit the CDE English Learners Web page <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/>. The CDE recently published an excellent resource, *Improving Education for English Learners: Research-Based Approaches*, that provides the most comprehensive, up-to-date strategies to serve English learners. Guidelines for using ELD and SDAIE strategies, as well as recommended instructional practices, are provided. The publication is available through the CDE Press Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/rc/>.

English learners need additional time for appropriate instructional support. The CCSS set rigorous expectations for student learning, and ELD instruction must accommodate these enhanced expectations. The following chart illustrates the enhancements in the CCSS in English language arts that may affect ELD instruction. This chart provides teachers with initial guidance in planning effective ELD instruction.

Transition to Common Core State Standards with California Additions Planning ELD Instruction: Grade Six	
Reading Standards for Literature	<p>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.</p> <p>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. (See grade 6 Language standards 4-6 for additional expectations.)</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>

	<p>and topics.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>Reading Standards for Informational Text</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. 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. 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). 4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings. (See grade 6 Language standards 4–6 for additional expectations.) 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. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Analyze the use of text features (e.g., graphics, headers, captions) in popular media. 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. 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. 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). 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.
<p>Writing Standards</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> b. Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons.

- d. Establish and maintain a formal style.
 - e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.
2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
- a. Introduce a topic **or thesis statement**; 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.
 - b. Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
 - c. Use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
 - d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
 - e. Establish and maintain a formal style.
 - f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented.
3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
- 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.
 - c. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.
 - d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events.
 - e. Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.
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.)

	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p> <p>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”).</p> <p>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”).</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>Speaking and Listening Standards</p>	<p>1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grade 6 topics, texts, and issues</i>, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>b. Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.</p> <p>c. Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion.</p> <p>d. Review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>3. Delineate a speaker’s argument and specific claims, distinguishing claims that are</p>

	<p>supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.</p> <p>4. Present claims and findings (e.g., argument, narrative, informative, response to literature presentations), sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details and nonverbal elements to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.</p> <p>a. Plan and deliver an informative/explanatory presentation that: develops a topic with relevant facts, definitions, and concrete details; uses appropriate transitions to clarify relationships; uses precise language and domain specific vocabulary; and provides a strong conclusion.</p> <p>5. Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, images, music, sound) and visual displays in presentations to clarify information.</p>
<p>Language Standards</p>	<p>1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.</p> <p>a. Ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, possessive).</p> <p>b. Use all pronouns, including intensive pronouns (e.g., <i>myself, ourselves</i>), correctly.</p> <p>c. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.</p> <p>d. Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).</p> <p>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.</p> <p>2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.</p> <p>a. Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.</p> <p>3. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.</p> <p>a. Vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style.</p> <p>b. Maintain consistency in style and tone.</p>

	<p>4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on <i>grade 6 reading and content</i>, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. c. Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech. d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary). <p>5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words. c. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., <i>stingy</i>, <i>scrimping</i>, <i>economical</i>, <i>unwasteful</i>, <i>thrifty</i>). <p>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.</p>
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The Standards

The CCSS, with California additions, that follow are the prepublication version of the standards prepared by the Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE), updated on October 15, 2010. Content that is unique to California and which was added by California to the multi-state common core standards is in bold typeface. The SCOE document is available online at http://www.scoe.net/castandards/agenda/2010/ela_ccs_recommendations.pdf (Outside Source). The grade-six CCSS for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Education were adopted by the California State Board of Education on August 2, 2010.

A complete listing of the grade-six 1997 California English language arts standards is located on CDE Content Standards Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/documents/elacontentstnds.pdf>.

**Common Core State Standards
with California Additions
English Language Arts: Grade Six**

Reading Standards for Literature

Key Ideas and Details

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| 1. | Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. |
| 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. |
| 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

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| 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. (See grade 6 Language standards 4-6 for additional expectations.) |
| 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. |
| 6. | Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text. |

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

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| 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. |
| 8. | (Not applicable to literature) |
| 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

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| 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. |
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Reading Standards for Informational Text

Key Ideas and Details

1.	Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
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.
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	
4.	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings. (See grade 6 Language standards 4-6 for additional expectations.)
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. a. Analyze the use of text features (e.g., graphics, headers, captions) in popular media.
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	
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.
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.
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	
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	
Text Types and Purposes	
1.	Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. a. Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly. b. Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. Establish and maintain a formal style. e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.
2.	<p>Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Introduce a topic or thesis statement; 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. b. Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples. c. Use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts. d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. e. Establish and maintain a formal style. f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented.
3.	<p>Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters. c. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another. d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events. e. Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.
Production and Distribution of Writing	
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.)
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.)
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	
7.	Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.
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.
9.	<p>Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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”). 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	
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	
1.	<p>Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grade 6 topics, texts, and issues</i>, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. b. Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed. c. Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion.

	d. Review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing.
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.
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	
4.	<p>Present claims and findings (e.g., argument, narrative, informative, response to literature presentations), sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details and nonverbal elements to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.</p> <p>a. Plan and deliver an informative/explanatory presentation that: develops a topic with relevant facts, definitions, and concrete details; uses appropriate transitions to clarify relationships; uses precise language and domain specific vocabulary; and provides a strong conclusion.</p>
5.	Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, images, music, sound) and visual displays in presentations to clarify information.
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	
1.	<p>Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.</p> <p>a. Ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, possessive).</p> <p>b. Use all pronouns, including intensive pronouns (e.g., <i>myself, ourselves</i>), correctly.</p> <p>c. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.*</p> <p>d. Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).*</p> <p>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.*</p>
2.	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

* The following skills are particularly likely to require continued attention in higher grades as they are applied to increasingly sophisticated writing and speaking. See “Language Progress Skills Chart, by Grade” in CCSS.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.* b. Spell correctly.*
Knowledge of Language	
3.	<p>Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style. b. Maintain consistency in style and tone.
Vocabulary Acquisition and Use	
4.	<p>Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on <i>grade 6 reading and content</i>, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. b. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., <i>audience, auditory, audible</i>). c. Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech. d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).
5.	<p>Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., personification) in context. b. Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words. c. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., <i>stingy, scrimping, economical, unwasteful, thrifty</i>).
6.	<p>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.</p>

* The following skills are particularly likely to require continued attention in higher grades as they are applied to increasingly sophisticated writing and speaking. See “Language Progress Skills Chart, by Grade” in CCSS.