

A Teacher's Guide to Literacy Standards Implementation

Sixth Grade

Quarterly Sequence Guide



Purpose: This document was created to provide curricular guidance based on the grade level implementation of the Illinois Learning standards. The suggestions provided are intended to support quarterly selection of materials and instructional alignment to the standards. Equally successful models could be based around semesters, trimesters or other school schedules. Educators are allowed the flexibility to order the tasks and practices found on the Grade Quarter/Trimester Guide in any way, (located on page 3 of this guide). These tasks and practices are beneficial to teachers when implementing the standards and preparing for assessments. Always refer to standards for guidance.



The following literacy competencies should be a part of what students engage with regularly to be college and career ready. The importance of these skills is reflected in the overarching Anchor Standards and defined more fully in the supporting grade level standards. These standards also underscore students' need for regular opportunities to grapple with close, analytic reading of grade-level complex texts and to construct increasingly sophisticated responses in writing. Many tasks should include opportunities to write about these texts either to express an opinion/make an argument or to inform/explain. In addition, research and narrative writing tasks should be a part of each quarter/trimester. *All content areas must build robust instruction around discipline-specific literacy skills to better prepare students for college and career.*

Reading complex texts: All content areas require an analysis of grade level , complex texts: Students need to read and comprehend a range of grade-level complex texts, including texts from the domains of ELA, science, history/social studies, technical subjects and the arts. Because vocabulary is a critical component of reading comprehension, it should be assessed in the context of reading passages.

Students are expected to conduct close, analytic readings as well as compare and synthesize ideas across texts. Students then write about these texts either to express an opinion or to inform/explain. In addition, research and narrative writing tasks appear.

Writing effectively when using and/or analyzing sources: Students are expected to conduct text-focused discussions and produce (both collaboratively and independently), written work aligned with the standards. This requires students to demonstrate the interrelated literacy skills of reading, gathering evidence about what is read, as well as analyzing and presenting that evidence in writing. Building student competence and confidence through opportunities to observe teacher modeling and to participate in collaborative group writing experiences, for all three modes of writing, (Standards 1, 2 and 3), is necessary to encourage and support increasing independence at this level.

Conducting and reporting on research: This expands on “writing when analyzing sources” to require students to demonstrate their ability to gather resources, evaluate their relevance, and report on information and ideas they have investigated (i.e., conducting research to answer questions or to solve problems).

Speaking and listening: This requires students to demonstrate a range of interactive oral communication and interpersonal skills, including (but not limited to) skills necessary for making presentations, working collaboratively, sharing findings and listening carefully to the ideas of others. All content areas need to require the use of strong oral communication using discipline-specific discourse.

Language use for reading, writing and speaking: This requires students to have a strong command of grammar and spoken and written academic English. Students are asked to read and/or listen to texts and respond critically through discussion and in writing. Responses may take the form of written or oral explanation and opinion. Emphasis is placed on critical thinking, problem solving, and collaboration with peers. The transfer of language skills to students occurs through authentic tasks in reading, writing, and speaking.

Sixth Grade Expectations for Student Engagement

Providing students with opportunities to regularly practice the following skills provides them a chance to master grade level standards. If using a commercially published curriculum or district /school/teacher created materials, this guide can provide a pulse check as to whether specific components are present and if students are completing tasks that align to the standards and prepare for assessments.

Students also need opportunities to practice grade level social emotional learning (SEL) through high quality and authentic tasks. To assist educators in infusing the SEL, ISBE has provided "Stages" of development that include more detailed performance descriptors of student's skills. See the back of this guide for additional grade level materials for SEL.

Apply Vocabulary and Knowledge of Language

Students require multiple exposures to targeted vocabulary words in authentic contexts to retain an understanding of the words' meaning(s). Focus vocabulary instruction on words that students would transfer to use effectively in writing and speaking. Students should also be adept at using content-specific words to build knowledge through content under study. Students' vocabularies expand as they become more attuned to using context, knowledge of Greek and Latin roots and affixes, and word analysis to determine the meaning of academic words. Grammar and usage should be integrated with explicit instruction of language rules as they appear in the context of reading, writing and speaking while also reading with accuracy and fluency to comprehend texts.

Analyze Content

Students delve deeply into texts and build their knowledge base about different subjects through identifying and assessing evidence as well as accurately paraphrasing reading materials by citing key details. Students analyze both the structure and content of complex, grade-appropriate texts, determining how sentences and paragraphs within texts influence and contribute to the unfolding of a plot and the development and/or elaboration of events or ideas.

Conduct Discussions

Students should follow agreed upon rules to engage in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on one, small group, teacher-led), enabling them to build effectively on one another's ideas while clearly explaining their own. Share their findings in class discussions, practicing how logically to sequence ideas and highlight themes and key details they find most persuasive. Students should be able to explain how authors use reasons to

make their points and support arguments with evidence, separating unsupported assertions from those backed by evidence.

Students should have opportunities to practice SEL through discussions that focus on social-awareness and interpersonal skills. Teachers should look for students to exhibit decision-making skills and responsible behaviors in personal, school, and community contexts.

Cite Evidence

Students should be able to refer to details and examples from texts when explaining what the text says and when drawing inferences. Use the text, illustrations, photographs and other possible text features as the basis for answers.

Writing Expectations

Students will be increasingly challenged to sharpen their ability to write and speak with more clarity and coherence, providing clear reasons and relevant evidence. Students will learn how writers try to influence readers while discovering how they can do the same in their own prose. They discover how to answer questions through writing and can use rewriting opportunities to refine their understanding of a text or topic. Students must take a critical stance toward sources and apply criteria for identifying reliable information as opposed to mere conjecture.

Report Findings Students should use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume and clear pronunciation when orally presenting claims in a logical, coherent manner to accentuate main ideas or themes.

Digital Integration and Application

Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact /collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills sitting.

Text Types and Tasks

Students should be adept at reading text and answering questions solely based upon a text. However, text has become a term that encompasses a variety of materials inclusive of written work, visual representation such as clips of movies, or artwork, a variety of primary documents and secondary documents including speeches, and other media in a variety of formats such as blogs, posts, editorials, feeds, online texts, etc. It is up to the teacher's discretion to determine the text types based on the needs of students.

Various types of texts may be incorporated according to the relevance of the task. Teachers may use the most relevant reading standard in order to engage students. For support in crafting aligned literacy tasks, please view the grade level Guidance for Designing Literacy Tasks in the resource section of this guide.

Examples of Informational texts: exposition, argument and functional text in the form of personal essays, speeches, opinion pieces, essays about art or literature, biographies, memoirs, journalism pieces and historical/scientific/technical or economic accounts.

Examples of Literature: adventure stories, historical fiction, mysteries, myths, science fiction, realistic fiction, allegories, parodies, satire, drama, graphic novels, one-act/multi-act plays, narrative poems, lyrical poems, free-verse poems, sonnets, odes, ballads and epics.

Sixth Grade Quarter/Trimester Guide

(Optional model to consider when constructing a year-long course of instruction. Specific sample tasks and guidelines are modeled in the following document: [Sixth Grade Guidance for Literacy Task Design](#))

Reading

Reading Complex Texts: Students read on-grade level texts at the appropriate complexity such that they delve deeply into texts to summarize both the main and supporting ideas. Students should also explain what happened and why, and 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. Students should be able to explain how an author develops point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text and determine the central idea of a text (i.e., how it is conveyed through particular details). Summaries of a text should be distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

Students should be able to analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes). Trace and evaluate arguments 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 (e.g., a memoir written by and a biography on the same person).

Short Texts Literature - 40% Informational – 60%

Texts to include students working collaboratively and independently:

Fiction,	— Draw ample evidence from texts and present ideas and information orally using vocabulary learned.
poetry,	
Myths	
Science	— Present analyses in writing and orally
Social Studies or Arts	

Extended Text(s):

Literature (i.e., novel, short story, or play)
Informational (i.e, text, article, speech, etc)

Extended Text: Anchor or extended texts

- Compare and synthesize ideas across other related texts
- Have text-focused discussions
- Produce oral, and written responses



Writing

In Sixth Grade, students write to introduce topics and support ideas from experiences and sources. Additionally, they use technology to produce and publish writing. They are also expected to meet the grade-specific grammar and conventions standards and retain or further develop the skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades.

Writing routinely throughout the year requires students to:

- Write short constructed responses to text-dependent questions
- Write to build content knowledge and reflect on text(s)
- Mix on-demand, review, and revision writing tasks appropriate to grade level
- Build confidence and competence with technology
- Assess students' abilities to paraphrase, infer and integrate ideas from reading

Writing To Texts – 70% Analytical

Balance of Opinion & Informative/Explanatory Analyses (Aligns to PARCC Research Simulation or Literary Analysis Tasks)

- Write to create informative/explanatory pieces that display logical integration and coherence
- Use evidence
- Answer brief questions to craft multiparagraph responses
- Over the course of the year, analytic writing should include comparative analysis and student writing that shares findings from research projects

Writing Extended Research Projects:

- Participate in a shared research and writing project
- Write to address a topic/problem/issue
- Gather and synthesize relevant information from several informational and literary texts in various media or formats
- Take notes on sources and effectively assess the credibility of each source
- Accurately quote or paraphrase sources and incorporate basic bibliographic information
- Present findings in a variety of presentation methods, including informal/formal argumentative or explanatory contexts either in writing or oral formats

Writing Narratives - 30%

- Write narratives to express personal ideas and experiences; craft their own stories, and descriptions; and deepen understandings of literary concepts, structures and genres (short stories, anecdotes, poetry, drama) through purposeful imitation
- Write to reflect on **what they read** through imaginative writing and to practice sequencing events and ideas through narrative descriptions (**Aligns to PARCC Narrative Task**)



Resources to Support Sixth Grade Standards Implementation

[Standards Bookmarks](#) (for Teachers) [Designing Literacy Tasks](#)

Reading:

- ◇ [Text Complexity](#)
- ◇ [Text Dependent Questions](#)
- ◇ [Mentor Text Resources](#)
- ◇ [Strategies by Standard](#)
- ◇ [Fluency Guidance](#)
- ◇ [Text Sets](#)

Writing:

- ◇ [Strategies by Standard](#)

Language:

- ◇ [Vocabulary Strategies](#)
- ◇ [Context Clues Pamphlet](#)
- ◇ [Sentence Combining Strategies](#)

Speaking & Listening

- ◇ [Collaborative Conversation Sentence Stems](#)
- ◇ [Strategies by Standard](#)

Social Emotional Learning

- ◇ [Standards, Goals and Strategies](#)

Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself.

John Dewey



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