Fair Lawn

Public Schools

Fair Lawn, NJ

Literature Connections Grade 6

August

2016

Revised August 2016
Developed August 2012

Literature Connections 6 is an English course that was developed by the Fair Lawn English Language Arts Grade 6 Team and aligned to the Grade 6 New Jersey Student Learning Standards Initiative.

Fair Lawn School District

Committee Credits

Grade 6 English Language Arts Team

Danielle Bonito, Teacher and Reading Specialist

Gary Pankiewicz, Content Supervisor

Mary Pensallorto, Teacher and Reading Specialist

Faina Stolerman, Teacher

Literature Connections 6

I. Course Synopsis

The Grade 6 Literature Connections course is closely aligned to the English Language Arts New Jersey Student Learning Standards. The focus of this course is on literature-based text analysis and critical thinking, which prepares students to be analytical about resources and ideas as presented in novels, drama, nonfiction, research, and film. The 6th Grade Literature Connections Curriculum creates the foundation for students' growth and development within the areas of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language acquisition. The themes of Conflict, Coming of Age, Choice, and Change serve as the guiding principles of the course. There will also be opportunities for students to choose relevant texts that interest them as part of their studies. This Literature Connections course focuses primarily on narrative writing, information writing, and document-based analytical writing while also affording each student the opportunities to practice reader's response to open-ended questions through journaling and discussion. Ultimately, timed and processed writing opportunities will assess a student's ability to compose multi-paragraph responses the require students to use direct quotations, infer, paraphrase and integrate ideas proposed in multiple sources to ultimately promote an original thesis or claim.

II. Philosophy & Rationale

The purpose of the 6th Grade Literature Connections Curriculum is to encourage students to find the link between literature and their lives. An integral objective of the course is to promote and foster independent readers and thinkers who can recognize and relate to themes and symbols that are woven throughout a piece of literature or unit of study. Students will learn to apply higher order thinking skills to respond to issues rooted in the text. An important component of the course is the continual written and spoken expression of their responses. Students will write formally and creatively, exhibiting standard mechanics of grammar with an emphasis on student voice.

Teachers use English Language Arts New Jersey Student Learning Standards to create specific and measurable learning goals. Individual unit and/or lesson objectives will derive directly from the language of the grade-specific standards for Grade 6; teachers will look to the more general anchor standards and the New Jersey Department of Education's curriculum framework (http://www.nj.gov/education/cccs/frameworks/ela/) for guidance. The comprehensive standards are available at: http://www.state.nj.us/education/cccs/2016/ela/ . Differentiated instruction for students at different levels of achievement and specific learning needs (e.g. special education, English language learners, at-risk and Gifted & Talented) is embedded in targeted scaffolding based on knowledge of each student's interests and assessment data.

A. Philosophy and Rationale in Scaffolding Reading Instruction

Based on research on reading from the past forty years, the Fair Lawn English Department supports the three reading principles reported by Richard Allington (2003). Specifically, 1) students read better when they read more; 2) students learn from their reading when they have consistent opportunities to discuss and write about their reading; and 3) students need explicit instruction in reading comprehension strategies.

1. Reading More

In addition to curriculum-driven reading activities, independent reading is provided to support the various interests and learning needs of all students in each marking period (in Language Arts or Literature Connections). Teachers facilitate student opportunities to read books-of-choice and timely texts as part of classroom curriculum and instruction. In particular, reading conferences and, at times, project-based assignments foster a meaningful reading experience with differentiated rigor. The following questions support proficient reading reflection:

[A good reader asks…]

• What reading strategies impact comprehension?

• How does what you experience in life impact your interpretation of text?

• What additional perspectives are necessary for an enhanced understanding of the text?

• What parts of the text are most significant? Why?

• What is the author's purpose?

• What do you want to know more about?

• How is the study of academic vocabulary and vocabulary words in texts vocabulary so vital to a rigorous exploration of a text?

2. Sharing Ideas about Reading

In addition to written discussion and small-group collaboration, the Fair Lawn Language Arts Department engages students in purposeful paired discussions to share and process information more effectively. The following process may be used to operationalize "Turn and Talk" (Harvey & Daniels, 2009) as part of the classroom culture.

1. Explain the importance of actively sharing our thinking with a partner.
2. Teach the practice of partner conversation by reading a short text silently and modeling turn-and-talk guidelines. Ask students to notice the following: use eye contact; listen attentively, ask follow-up questions, disagree politely, share connections, and express reactions.

3. In guided practice, ask students to report their noticings. Create a classroom anchor chart that provides expectations for partner conversation. Choose a student-friendly topic and give it a go.

4. Provide consistent opportunities for partner conversations with deliberate student pairings. Whereas some prompts may be open-ended (e.g. What do you wonder about the text?), other prompts may be more specific (e.g. What was the main character's motivation? Or, what is the most important information in the text?)

3. Explicit Instruction in Reading Strategy

In-class reading of grade-level texts is supported by the application of reading strategies as noted in Harvey Daniels and Nancy Steineke's *Texts and Lessons for Content-Area Reading* (2010), provided to all English department members. Teachers target Tier II words (i.e. high frequency words used across content areas) and Tier III words (content-specific vocabulary words) and teach the words before they are encountered in the text. Pre-reading, during-reading, and post-reading strategies promote strategic thinking. For example, "Think Aloud" (p. 62), "Pair Reading" (p. 66), and "Text Annotation" (p.41) are explained within model lessons by Daniels and Steineke (2010). One culminating goal is to model proficient reading behaviors such as higher order questioning and an enthusiastic passion for inquiry while gradually releasing this skill work to more strategic-thinking students.

a. ACHIEVE 3000 Reading Comprehension Assessment Support

All Grade 8 students participate in the ACHIEVE 3000 Level Set Assessment. This research-based assessment generates a Lexile reading measure for each student. In turn, this assessment data supports differentiated instruction by engaging students in texts at their independent reading levels with consistent challenge to improve nonfiction reading skills.

B. Writing Scaffolding

Writing instruction in the Fair Lawn Language Arts Department includes a balance of student journaling, open-ended responses, and formative writing assessments. In the end, students complete summative processed and timed writing in designated writing genres. Teachers confer and write specific and individualized feedback to support revision during the writing process. Students will write on a variety of subjects, in a variety of genres, for a variety of readers.

The following questions support proficient writing reflection [A good writer asks…]:
- Why must the purpose of the writer be determined?
- What makes a piece of writing effective?
- Why is it important to have a cogent thesis statement or arguable claim?
- Why are supporting details essential in argument-based writing?
- How could voice be employed to engage the writer's audience?
- Why is it important, in terms of meaning, to use correct grammar conventions and organizational structure?

Processed Writing Resources:

1. Although this course is novels-based, tools for writing development are integrated in the grade-specific textbook used in the Language Arts course. In particular, a hard copy of the *Common Core Edition Holt McDougal Literature* textbook is available in the classroom's workshop approach, while an online copy of the text is available to students at home.
2. In addition, the Fair Lawn Language Arts Department uses the *Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) web site (http://owl.english.purdue.edu/)* as a resource for facilitating the academic writing process: prewriting, drafting, sharing, revising, editing, proofreading, and publishing. Teachers create teaching points for writing instruction in collaboration in planning and with Fair Lawn students in mind.
3. The PARCC web site provides resources including standards-aligned rubrics for narrative writing and expository writing. These rubrics serve as starting points for teacher-driven writing rubrics that are created with Fair Lawn Language Arts students in mind. For example, the Fair Lawn Language Arts Department and Social Studies Department collaborated on an integrated expectation for document-based essay writing across the two subjects. These writing plans are shared in a department Google Drive. In addition, each writing assignment is supported with a clear writing expectation as represented in a writing rubric.

III. Scope & Sequence

There are four thematic and genre-based units (Units 1-4); the goal is to study each unit within one marking period. Vocabulary, Literary Terms, and Grammar is embedded in each unit.

Marking Period 1	Marking Period 2
Unit 1 **Theme:** Change **Core Texts:** • *Flipped* by Wendelin Van Dranne **Film Study**: • *Flipped* film study **WRITING FOCUS**: Narrative	**Unit 2** **Theme:** Choice **Core Text:** • *Among the Hidden* by Margaret Peterson Haddix **WRITING FOCUS:** Research Simulation Task
Marking Period 3	**Marking Period 4**
Unit 3 **Theme:** Conflict: Internal Conflict vs. External Conflict **Core Texts:** • *Among the Imposters* by Margaret Peterson Haddix **WRITING FOCUS:** Research Simulation Task/Poetry	**Unit 4** **Theme:** Coming of Age (Independent reading/literature circles) **Core Texts (options include):** • *Harry Potter* by J.K. Rowling • *The Wednesday Wars* by Gary D. Schmidt • *Summer of the Swans* by Betsy Byars • *Seedfolks* by Paul Fleischman • *We Beat the Street* by Sharon Draper, Remeck Hunt, Sampson Davis, and George W. Jenkins **WRITING FOCUS (options include**): Poetry/persuasive/explanatory ✓ http://www.parcconline.org/ ✓ Simmons, Amber M. "Class on Fire: Using the Hunger Games Trilogy to Encourage Social Action." *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy,* 56(1), 22–34. doi: 10.1002/jaal.99.

Continuous Units (These units are taught throughout the school year):

Unit 5: Vocabulary
1. Targeted vocabulary words in curriculum-driven core texts
2. Define words based on context
3. Apply the vocabulary to students' own writing
4. Reinforce roots and affixes (mindful of those studied in Language Arts 8)
5. Utilize semantic mapping (e.g., Frayer model, word webs, and Wordle)

Unit 6: Literary Terms/Figurative Language
1. Assign literary terms from context
2. Define terms in context
3. Create authentic application of terms
4. Demonstrate understanding of terms in Literary Analysis Essays

Unit 8: Grammar
1. Understand grammatical terms and concepts
2. Apply these grammatical terms and concepts to their own written and verbal communication
3. Utilize resources such as *GUM* texts, Purdue OWL, noredink.com, etc.

Unit 9: Independent Reading
1. Student choice of text and task, within given parameters (genre, assignment selections, etc.)
2. Assessment options include: written essays/interviews/letters, multimedia/oral presentations, scrapbook/poster projects, newspaper projects, skits, and news broadcasts

IV. Unit Descriptions

Unit 1: Change

Enduring Understandings:
1. As the year progresses, students are changing physically, intellectually, socially and emotionally. Realization begins when students advance into uncharted territories. Ways that worked in the past, may no longer work in the present.
2. Reading and analyzing fictional characters' thoughts and actions will foster self-awareness and change.
3. Additionally through discussions, students will acquire tools to handle change more effectively.

Essential Questions:
- How do personal experiences shape and change one's point of view?
- What impacts the development of a person's character?
- How can people see the same events so differently?

Texts	Films
Flipped by Wendelin Van Dranne	*Flipped* film study

Learning Targets Aligned to Grade-Specific New Jersey Student Learning Standards	
Objectives	**Activities**
Students will be able to: RL.6.1. Cite textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. RL.6.2. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments. RL.6.3. Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.	• Character study introduced • Characterization activities may include: Character plates, poster projects, character profiles • Introduction of elements of plot • Introduction of Point of View and Voice through creative writing activities such as journal entries or presentations such as skits • Class, group, and partner discussions about themes and issues in novel • Vocabulary in Context • **Writing:** Narrative essay wherein students extend the text by writing about what happens after the end of the novel.

RL.6.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

RL.6.5. Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.

RL.6.6. Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.

RL.6.7. Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they "see" and "hear" when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.

RL.6.9. Compare, contrast and reflect on (e.g. practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) 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. W.6.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

Poems to Consider
- "Annabel Lee" by Edgar Allan Poe
- "The New Boy" by Juliana Harris
- "Ode to Family Photographs" by Gary Soto
- "The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost

- **Use the following link for ideas**
  http://www.heinemann.com/shared/onlineresources/e02710/introduction.pdf

Media
- Nick News: "Tales of Middle School Romance"
- Nick News: "Boys & Girls: A Class of Their Own"

Nonfiction Connections
- *"Can Boys and Girls Be Friends?"*
- *"Being Cool In Middle School May Not Be Good For Your Future"*
- *http://www.wired.com/wiredscience/2010/07/happiness-and-money-2/*
- *http://losangeles.cbslocal.com/2011/01/12/protesters-block-gates-to-save-arcadia-oaks-sycamores/*

ACHIEVE 3000 Articles
- **"**All Eyes on the Eagle" (Grades 1-12)
- "A Life Helping Others" (Grades 1-12)
- "Fun for All" (Grades 1-12)
- "City Chickens" (Grades 1-12)
- "Sting Speaks Out" (Grades 1-8)

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.

SL.6.4. Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate speaking behaviors (e.g., eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation).

Unit 2: Choice

Enduring Understanding:
1. Characters in a story often reflect our values, motives, desires, and traits
2. Characters in a story can help us to better understand ourselves (who we are)
3. How do we make the right choices despite difficult circumstances?

Essential Questions:
- How does environment and experience affect beliefs and behavior?
- How can loyalty create internal conflict?
- How might the study of characters, help us to better understand ourselves?

Texts	Films
Among the Hidden by Margaret P. Haddix	N/A

Learning Targets Aligned to Grade-Specific New Jersey Student Learning Standards	
Objectives	**Activities**
Students will be able to: RL.6.1. Cite textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. RL.6.2. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments. RL.6.3. Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution. RL.6.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.	• Continue character study • Engage in pre-reading activities • Reinforce plot elements and analyze the impact of setting on a character • Vocabulary in context • Core non-fiction texts • Reading and responding for comprehension • Focus on textual evidence to support your assertions • **Writing:** Research Simulation Task **Poems to Consider** • "Message from a Caterpillar" – Lilian Moore • "Dreams" – Langston Hughes • "Like Bookends" – Eve Merriam

RL.6.5. Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.

RL.6.6. Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.

RL.6.7. Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they "see" and "hear" when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.

RL.6.9. Compare, contrast and reflect on (e.g. practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) 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.

RI.6.1. Cite textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RI.6.2. Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

RI.6.3. Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).

RI.6.6. Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.

RI.6.9. Compare, contrast and reflect on (e.g. practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) one author's presentation of events with that of another (e.g., a memoir written by and a biography on the same person).

Media
- NBC News – "China's Population Growth Slowing"http://www.nbcnews.com/video/nightly-news/43023325#43023325
- PBS - "Phillip Longman and Julia Whitty on population control"- http://video.pbs.org/video/2056734941/

RST Topic: Population Control
- "Addressing the Disastrous Consequences of China's One-Child Policy" by Marc Rubio
- "One Child Policy Starts to Cost China" by Bloomberg
- "How China's one-child policy hurts the elderly" (Video) CNBC

Additional RST Topics, Articles, and Media

Negative effects of too much homework
- "Stanford Research Shows Pitfalls of Homework" by Clifton B. Parker
- http://news.stanford.edu/news/2014/march/too-much-homework-031014.html
- "Rethinking Homework" by Alfie Kohn
- http://www.alfiekohn.org/teaching/rethinkinghomework.htm
- "Can Too Much Homework Harm Your Child's Health?" CBS New York https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0hxC4OfP-iM

Service Dogs
- "Healing Tails" by Natalie Pompilio from Neurology Now (February/March 2016)
- "Working Like a Dog" (Associated Press) - Achieve3000
- Video clip- Service Dogs

http://storyworks.scholastic.com/Video-Archive

W.6.1. 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.

D. Establish and maintain a formal/academic style, approach, and form.

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

W.6.7. Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.

W.6.8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess the credibility of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources.

W.6.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

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").

SL.6.4. Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate speaking behaviors (e.g., eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation).

ACHIEVE 3000 Articles
- "Don't Speak Out" (Grades 1-12)
- "No Land? No Problem!" **(**Grades 1-8)
- "How We Count America" (Grade 5)
- "Life on the Border" (Grades 1-12)

Unit 3: Change: Internal Challenges

Enduring Understanding:

1. What is conflict?
2. How does conflict reveal character?
3. Risks must be taken for progress to occur.
4. Characters, like us, are shaped and molded by their environment, the people around them, and their life experience.

Essential Questions:

- How do we make difficult choices in circumstances we cannot control?
- How does conflict influence an individual's decisions and actions?
- How do the character conflicts influence the progression and resolution of the plot?
- How can one individual's actions impact others?

Texts	Films
Among the Imposters by Margaret Peterson Haddix	N/A

Learning Targets Aligned to Grade-Specific New Jersey Student Learning Standards:	
Objectives	**Activities**
Students will be able to: RL.6.1. Cite textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. RL.6.2. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments. RL.6.3. Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution. RL.6.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.	- Continue character study - Engage in pre-reading activities - Reinforce plot elements and understand character motives - Vocabulary in context - Core non-fiction texts - Reading and responding for comprehension - Focus on textual evidence to support your assertions **Writing:** Research Simulation Task/Poetry **Nonfiction connections**

RL.6.5. Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.

RL.6.6. Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.

RL.6.7. Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they "see" and "hear" when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.

RL.6.9. Compare, contrast and reflect on (e.g. practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) 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.

RI.6.1. Cite textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RI.6.2. Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

RI.6.3. Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).

RI.6.6. Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.

RI.6.9. Compare, contrast and reflect on (e.g. practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) one author's presentation of events with that of another (e.g., a memoir written by and a biography on the same person).

- Forbes.com . "Why China Is Finally Abandoning Its One Child Policy"
- NY Times, "Adopted in China, Seeking Identity in America"

Poetry
- "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" – Robert Frost
- "Boxes and Bags" – Carl Sandburg
- "Between Two Hills" – Carl Sandburg

ACHIEVE 3000 Articles
- "Castro Steps Down" (Grades 6-12)
- "Watch What You Eat. . . or Parents Will" (Grades 1-12)
- "The Count Is In" (Grades 1-12)

W.6.1. Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

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

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

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

    I.   Establish and maintain a formal/academic style, approach, and form.

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

W.6.7. Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.

W.6.8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess the credibility of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources.

W.6.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

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").

SL.6.4. Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate speaking behaviors (e.g., eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation).

L.6.5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

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., *stingy, scrimping, economical, unwasteful, thrifty*).

L.6.6. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Unit 4: Coming of Age (Independent reading/literature circles)

Enduring Understandings:
1. What does growing up mean?
2. What issues do adolescents face in today's world?
3. When given the opportunity, how will I choose a book for enjoyment?

Essential Questions:
- What effect does family have on growing up?
- What effect does culture/social norms have on growing up?
- How do people show characteristics of changes in their lives?

Core Texts (options include):
- *Harry Potter* by J.K. Rowling
- *The Wednesday Wars* by Gary D. Schmidt
- *Summer of the Swans* by Betsy Byars
- *Seedfolks* by Paul Fleischman
- *We Beat the Street* by Sharon Draper, Remeck Hunt, Sampson Davis, and George W. Jenkins

Learning Targets Aligned to Grade-Specific New Jersey Student Learning Standards:	
Objectives	**Activities**
Students will be able to: RL.6.1. Cite textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. RL.6.2. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments. RL.6.3. Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution. RL.6.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the	**Independent Reading** - Student choice of text and task, within given parameters (genre, assignment selections, etc.) - Activities may include: book jacket, fishbowl activities, online discussion boards, multimedia/oral presentations, scrapbook/poster projects, newspaper projects, skits, and news broadcasts, etc.

impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

RL.6.5. Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.

RL.6.6. Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.

RL.6.7. Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they "see" and "hear" when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.

RL.6.9. Compare, contrast and reflect on (e.g. practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) 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.

RI.6.1. Cite textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RI.6.2. Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

RI.6.3. Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).

RI.6.6. Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.

Literature Circles
- Option 1: Teacher selected text based on theme and/or reading level.
- Option 2: Students select texts based on preference, reading level, and teacher suggestion
- Students are responsible for completing assigned roles/tasks/reading prior to group discussions
- Small, flexible groups gather to discuss topics of choice or assigned topics
- Students use notes to guide reading and discussion
- Teacher serves as facilitator
- Culminate in large-group sharing and/or final project and/or assessment(s)

Poetry
1. Students read various poems and identify figurative devices within the text
2. Students create original poems infused with specific figurative devices.

Poems to Consider
- "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" by Robert Frost
- "Messy Room" by Shel Silverstein
- "Be Glad Your Nose is on Your Face" by Jack Prelutsky
- "Dream Deferred" by Langston Hughes

RI.6.9. Compare, contrast and reflect on (e.g. practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) one author's presentation of events with that of another (e.g., a memoir written by and a biography on the same person).

W.6.1. Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

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

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

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

- N. Establish and maintain a formal/academic style, approach, and form.

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

W.6.7. Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.

W.6.8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess the credibility of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources.

W.6.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

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").

SL.6.4. Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate speaking behaviors (e.g., eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation).

L.6.5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

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

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

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

L.6.6. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

V. Course Materials

Most course materials include the texts specified in the curriculum-driven unit plans.

Language Arts Textbook:
- Allen, J., Applebee, A.N., Burke, J., Carnine, D., Jackson, Y., Jago, C., et al. (2012). *Holt McDougal literature grade 6*. Orlando, FL: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- G.U.M. (Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics) Grade 6 Student Edition

VI. Assessments

Formative Assessments

- Journal writing
- Text annotations
- MLA format instruction and use
- Exploration and explanation of quotes from novel, in writing and discussion
- Vocabulary activities and quizzes
- Written responses using textual evidence
- Quote analysis & responses
- Class discussions
- Homework/classwork assignments
- Vocabulary and comprehension check quizzes
- Literature circles

Summative Assessments

- Writing tasks (literary analysis, RST, narrative) utilizing the writing process
- Cumulative test
- Independent reading projects
- Presentations

VII. Interdisciplinary Connections and Alignment to Technology Standards

English/Media Arts
- Students choose books for independent reading projects in collaboration with the middle school media specialist.
- Technology-based process supports preparation for MLA-style academic writing. This includes a media-driven support.

Language Arts/Literature Connections/Social Studies
- The Language Arts Department (Language Arts and Literature Connections courses) and Social Studies Department have partnered to provide an integrated approach to nonfiction reading instruction and practice in the use of the ACHIEVE 3000 online reading program. Teachers receive training in implementing the ACHIEVE 3000 program and share integrated resources on a department Google Share Drive.
- In addition, Literature Connections and Social Studies teachers provide an integrated approach to document-based writing (including video texts). Teachers share integrated resources on a department Google Share Drive.
- The three departments participate in an interdisciplinary vocabulary initiative with a focus on morphology.