

ENGLISH COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Title: Language Arts Grade 6

Department: English Language Arts

Primary Course Materials: Prentice Hall Literature Anthology (new series)

Heath Grammar and Composition

Write Source

Scholastic Grammar Usage and Mechanics

Elements of Language

Various trade books

Course Description: Language Arts/Literature Enrichment 6

The Chelmsford Public Schools' Language Arts/Literature Enrichment program builds on the skills that students developed in grade 5. It is designed to meet the needs of all students. Students read pieces that include fiction and non-fiction, short stories, essays and articles, poetry, and drama. High interest novels are also used in literature circles.

Instructional strategies are clearly in keeping with what research says good reading practices should employ. Students are taught to be strategic readers. All tools for assessment are employed with the most current theories represented. This program provides structure, a community learning experience, and support for all students - strong independent readers, students who are working towards independence, and students who still require support. **Because the Prentice Hall Anthology is new this year, teachers are testing what reading selections will best meet the needs of their students.**

Students are required to participate in the middle school summer reading program.

During 6th grade students write narrative, descriptive, expository and persuasive essays.

Students' compositions follow the steps of the writing process. Sources for writing are the various content areas, trade books, and the literature anthology. In addition, students may experience journal and diary writing and other free writing opportunities. Creative writing in prose, poetry, and writing for fun are other alternatives students may explore. Prior to the MCAS test there is a focus on answering open response questions. Students maintain a classroom portfolio to document their development in composition. At the end of the year, portfolios are sent to the grade seven English teachers. This is an integrated course which includes grammar, usage, mechanics, vocabulary and spelling.

Essential Questions:

1. How do students relate experiences in their lives to the experiences of characters in literature*?
2. How do students' abilities to utilize the six traits of writing in a variety of genres improve their ability to communicate ideas and effectively support their opinions?
3. How does the study of historical fiction help students better understand ancient cultures?

* courage, responsibility, respect, and friendship

Course Objectives:

Students will be able to:

1. identify literary elements in various pieces of literature
2. write essays with well-developed thesis statements
3. build on their knowledge of the six traits of writing in their essays
4. answer open response questions using evidence from the text
5. build upon vocabulary through literature, discussion, spelling and word study
6. present research findings orally
7. read a variety of literary works

Learning Standards from the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework:

A chart is attached identifying which of the standards from the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks will be assessed in this course.

Content Outline:

Unit 1: Fiction and Non-Fiction

In order to compare and contrast fiction and non-fiction, students read and analyze examples of both genres.

Title	Author	Focus
“Stray”	Cynthia Rylant	Making predictions, Plot
“The Homecoming”	Laurence Yep	Making predictions, Plot
“The Drive-in Movies”	Gary Soto	Making predictions, Point of view
“The Market Square Dog”	James Harriot	Making predictions, Point of view
“Stage Fright”	Mark Twain	Fact & opinion, Author’s perspective
“My Papa, Mark Twain”	Susy Clemens	Fact & opinion, Author’s perspective
“The Lady and The Spider”	Robert Fulghum	Fact & opinion and Tone
“Names/Nobres”	Julia Alvarez	Fact & opinion and Tone

Unit 2: Short Stories

Students read a minimum of six short stories. The elements of the short story are discussed in this unit: plot and conflict, characters, setting and theme.

Title	Author	Focus
“The Tail”	Joyce Hansen	Make inferences, Characterization
“Dragon, Dragon”	John Gardner	Make Inferences, Characterization

“Zlateh the Goat”	Isaac Bashevis Singer	Make inferences, Conflict
“The Old Woman Who Lived with Wolves”	Chief Luther Standing Bear	Make inferences, Conflict
“The All-American Slurp”	Lensey Namioka	Draw conclusions, Theme
“The Circuit”	Francisco Jimenez	Draw conclusions, Theme
“The King of Mazy May”	Jack London	Draw conclusions, Setting
“Aaron’s Gift”	Myron Levoy	Draw conclusions, Setting

Unit 3: Essays and Articles

Essays and articles are introduced. Students gain an understanding of the purpose of non-fiction writing: to inform, persuade, entertain and/or explain.

Title	Author	Focus
“Hard as Nails”	Russell Baker	Author’s purpose, Narrative
“Water”	Hellen Keller	Author’s purpose, Narrative
“The Shutout”	Patricia and Fredrick McKissack	Author’s purpose, Expository
“Jackie Robinson: Justice at Last”	Geoffrey C. Ward and Ken Burns	Author’s purpose, Expository
“Langston Terrace”	Eloise Greenfield	Main Idea, Author’s influence
“Turkeys”	Bailey White	Main Idea, Author’s influence
“La Lena Buena”	John Phillip Santos	Main Idea, Mood
From “The Pigman and Me”	Paul Zindel	Main Idea, Mood

Unit 4: Poetry

Poetry is introduced with models of different forms. Students read and analyze poetry to determine its meaning. They identify and use elements of poetry. Following is a partial list of the poetry that is read.

“Adventures of Isabel”	Ogden Nash	Context Clues, Sound Devices
“A Dream Within A Dream”	Edgar Allen Poe	Context Clues, Sound Devices
“Similie: Willow & Ginkgo”	Eve Merriam	Context Clues, Figurative Language
“Abuelito Who”	Sandra Cisneros	Context Clues, Figurative Language
“Dust of Snow”	Robert Frost	Comparing Literary Works;
“who knows if the moon’s”	E.E. Cummings	Point of View
“Limerick”	Anonymous	Paraphrasing, Forms of Poetry, Idioms
“No Thank You”	Shel Silverstein	Paraphrasing, Sound Devices, Idioms
“The Fairies Lullaby”	William Shakespeare	Paraphrasing, Sound Devices, Idioms

Unit 5: Drama

In the drama unit students are exposed to the different models, elements and types of drama.

“The Phantom Tollbooth”	Susan Nanus	Summary, Dialogue in Drama
From “The Phantom Tollbooth”	Norton Juster	Comparing Literary Works: Novels & Dramatization
“The Phantom Tollbooth” Act II	Susan Nanus	Compare & Contrast, Stage Directions

Unit 6: Themes in Literature

Various types of folk literature including myths, fables, folk tales and legends are modeled. Students read and identify themes.

“The Ant and the Dove”	Leo Tolstoy	Cause & Effect, Fables and Folk Tales
“The Lion and The Bulls”	Aesop	Cause & Effect, Fables and Folk Tales
“The Whale Rider”	Witi Ihimaera	Cause & Effect, Myths
“Arachne”	Olivia E. Coolidge	Cause & Effect, Myths
“Why the Tortoise’s Shell is Not Smooth”	Chinua Achebe	Setting a Purpose for Reading, Personification
“The Stone”	Llyod Alexander	Setting a Purpose for Reading, Universal Themes
“The Three Wishes”	Ricardo E. Alegria	Setting a Purpose for Reading, Universal Themes
“Lob’s Girl”	Joan Aiken	Foreshadowing and Flashback

Literature Circle Novels

Students will participate in literature circles by reading at least two novels and engaging in group discussions with peers.

Literature Circle Books

Selections chosen are at teacher discretion.

<u>Loser</u>	Thomas Bernhard
<u>The Star Fischer</u>	Lawrence Yep
<u>The Summer of the Swans</u>	Betsy Cromer Byars
<u>The Big Wave</u>	Pearl S. Buck
<u>Walk Two Moons</u>	Sharon Creech
<u>Wrinker</u>	Jeanne Duprau
<u>The City of Ember</u>	Jerry Spinelli
<u>Finding Buck McHenry</u>	Alfred Slote
<u>My Sixth Grade Sugar Babies</u>	Eve Bunting
<u>The Phantom Tollbooth</u>	Norton Juster
<u>Bonanza Girl</u>	Patricia Beatty

<u>The Boy Who Saved Baseball</u>	John H. Ritter
<u>Pacific Crossing</u>	Gary Soto
<u>Island of the Blue Dolphins</u>	Scott O’Dell
<u>My Side of the Mountain</u>	Jean Craighead George
<u>The Cay</u>	Theodore Taylor
<u>The Witch of Blackbird Pond</u>	Elizabeth Speare
<u>Lyddie</u>	Katherine Paterson
<u>Bearstone</u>	Will Hobbs
<u>Searching for Candlestick Park</u>	Peg Kehret
<u>Hatchet</u>	Gary Paulsen
<u>Park’s Quest</u>	Katherine Paterson

Vocabulary Study

Vocabulary development is ongoing. The vocabulary study comes from individual stories in the anthology, and assigned novels. Students use context clues, roots, prefixes, suffixes, and finally, the dictionary to unlock the meaning of unknown terms.

Writing Expectations

Our goal is to help students become proficient to advanced readers and writers. Good practice in reading instruction, writing instruction, and language conventions will help students succeed on the MCAS exam without limiting instruction to teaching to the test. However, focused practice on assessments that are similar to those expected on the MCAS augment effective instruction and help students prepare for the test.

Students are expected to write the following kinds of essays in sixth grade: narrative, informational, literature analysis, and persuasive. They also complete a research project which includes an oral presentation.

	NARRATIVE	EXPOSITORY				POETRY
Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student writes about his or her personal experience • A true or fictional story 	Informational Essay (Gr. 5-7 MCAS Requirement)	Literature Analysis (Gr. 8-10 MCAS Requirement)	Persuasive	Research Paper	
6	3	2	1	1	1	1

Major Evaluation Strategies:

Name of Assessment	Type of Assessment		Standards Assessed	Course Objectives Assessed
	Test	Performance Assessment		
Multi-draft essay (Strand-Literature, Composition) in Language Arts Portfolio		X	10,11,14,15,16,19,20,21,22,23,24	1,2,4,7
Core Assignment - Essay		X	11, 14,16, 19, 20, 21,22, 23	1,2,4,7
Unit tests containing objective questions, short answers, and/or open-ended responses	X			3,4,7
Quizzes containing multiple choice, short answer, and/or open-ended responses, vocabulary	X			3,4,7
Homework		X		All
Class Participation		X		All
Reading Comprehension		X		All
Open Responses		X		3,7
Project based novel assessment		X		
Spelling tests	X			

Learning Standards from the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks

Language Strand		
x	Standard 1: Discussion	Students will use agreed-upon rules for informal and formal discussions in small and large groups.
x	Standard 2: Questioning, Listening, and Contributing	Students will pose questions, listen to the ideas of others, and contribute their own information or ideas in group discussions or interviews in order to acquire new knowledge.
x	Standard 3: Oral Presentation	Students will make oral presentations that demonstrate appropriate consideration of audience, purpose, and the information to be conveyed.
x	Standard 4: Vocabulary and Concept Development	Students will understand and acquire new vocabulary and use it correctly in reading and writing.
x	Standard 5: Structure and Origins of Modern English	Students will analyze standard English grammar and usage and recognize how its vocabulary has developed and been influenced by other languages.

x	Standard 6: Formal and Informal English	Students will describe, analyze, and use appropriately formal and informal English.
Reading and Literature Strand		
x	Standard 7: Beginning Reading	Students will understand the nature of written English and the relationship of letters and spelling patterns to the sounds of speech.
x	Standard 8: Understanding a Text	Students will identify the basic facts and main ideas in a text and use them as the basis for interpretation.
x	Standard 9: Making Connections	Students will deepen their understanding of a literary or non-literary work by relating it to its contemporary context or historical background.
x	Standard 10: Genre	Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the characteristics of different genres.
x	Standard 11: Theme	Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of theme in a literary work and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.
x	Standard 12: Fiction	Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the structure and elements of fiction and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.
x	Standard 13: Nonfiction	Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the purposes, structure, and elements of nonfiction or informational materials and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.
x	Standard 14: Poetry	Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the themes, structure, and elements of poetry and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.
x	Standard 15: Style and Language	Students will identify and analyze how an author's words appeal to the senses, create imagery, suggest mood, and set tone, and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.
x	Standard 16: Myth, Traditional Narrative, and Classical Literature	Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the themes, structure, and elements of myths, traditional narratives, and classical literature and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

Reading and Literature Strand(cont'd)

x	Standard 17: Dramatic Literature	Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the themes, structure, and elements of drama and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.
	Standard 18: Dramatic Reading and Performance	Students will plan and present dramatic readings, recitations, and performances that demonstrate appropriate consideration of audience and purpose.

Composition Strand

x	Standard 19: Writing	Students will write with a clear focus, coherent organization, and sufficient detail.
x	Standard 20: Consideration of Audience and Purpose	Students will write for different audiences and purposes.
x	Standard 21: Revising	Students will demonstrate improvement in organization, content, paragraph development, level of detail, style, tone, and word choice (diction) in their compositions after revising them.
x	Standard 22: Standard English Conventions	Students will use knowledge of standard English conventions in their writing, revising, and editing.
x	Standard 23: Organizing Ideas in Writing	Students will organize ideas in writing in a way that makes sense for their purpose.
x	Standard 24: Research	Students will gather information from a variety of sources, analyze and evaluate the quality of the information they obtain, and use it to answer their own questions.
x	Standard 25:	Students will develop and use appropriate rhetorical, logical, and stylistic criteria for

	Evaluating Writing and Presentations	assessing final versions of their compositions or research projects before presenting them to varied audiences.
Media Strand		
	Standard 26: Analysis of Media	Students will identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the conventions, elements, and techniques of film, radio, video, television, multimedia productions, the Internet, and emerging technologies and provide evidence from the works to support their understanding.
	Standard 27: Media Production	Students will design and create coherent media productions (audio, video, television, multimedia, Internet, emerging technologies) with a clear controlling idea, adequate detail, and appropriate consideration of audience, purpose, and medium.