



# Bedford Public Schools

## Grade 6 – English Language Arts

The sixth grade program is an integrated study of communication skills that includes reading, writing, research, speaking, and listening. Grade six is a transitional year in which students start to look at literature from a more analytic perspective. The foundations of literature, including literary devices, author's style, subtext, motif, and examination of literary structure and style are introduced while basic skills such as asking questions, making connections, and drawing inferences continue to be reinforced. Students begin to understand the partnership between reading and writing as they write pieces that coordinate with what they are reading (e.g. looking at plot structure in a story prior to writing their own story). While the sixth grade reading program focuses heavily on fiction, non-fiction is integrated as a means for understanding the background to a story or an author's life. In addition, non-fiction is explored in preparation for students to undertake a research project.

In writing, students continue to focus on the foundations of paragraph structure as well as the composition of larger pieces. They begin developing the ability to craft claims reflecting a central idea as well as skills for supporting for these ideas. Additionally, students are introduced to various genres of writing, including narrative, poetry, and exposition. Purpose and audience are also highlighted as important aspects of writing. Supplemental grammar and vocabulary units enable students to polish their writing and hone their reading comprehension.

Formal presentations as well as informal discussions and debate provide students with opportunities to further develop the ability to present their thoughts and ideas coherently.

Critical thinking is a key component of the curriculum as students are asked to independently apply their skills to a variety of situations. This practice may appear in the form of dissecting vocabulary into word segments, analyzing a story to identify the deeper meaning, or examining the world to write about individual, unique experiences.

Overall, in sixth grade, students are expected to advance their skills as active readers, critical thinkers, and creative writers who are able to engage more deeply with the world in which they live.



### Learning Expectations

[Reading: Literature and Informational Text](#)

[Writing: Argument, Informational/Expository and Narrative Writing Skills](#)

[Speaking and Listening](#)

[Language Standards](#)

**Reading: Literature and Informational Text**

<b>Enduring Understandings</b> In order to meet the standards, the students will need to understand that . . .	<b>Essential Questions</b> In order to understand, students will need to consider questions such as . . .	<b>Knowledge and Skills</b> Learning this material will require students to . . . <i>*Boldface type indicates emphasis</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowing the structure of a text helps the reader set a purpose, direct his or her own pace, and anticipate a text's development.</li> <li>Literature acts as a mirror to the human experience (in conflict, character, motivation, etc).</li> <li>Subtext, the deeper layers of meaning in a story, includes techniques such as allegory, symbolism, implication, motif, and theme.</li> <li>When an author writes, he or she both purposefully and inadvertently includes elements of his or her background and perspective.</li> <li>Active reading allows readers to engage in critical thinking.</li> <li>A researcher should evaluate the credibility of a source, determine whether to paraphrase or directly quote information, and accurately document all sources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What role does a text's structure play in communicating an author's ideas?</li> <li>How does literature give us insight into the human experience and our individual lives?</li> <li>What is subtext in literature, and how does it enrich my experience as a reader?</li> <li>How does an author's life experience influence his or her writing?</li> <li>What is active reading, and how can it help me better understand what I am reading?</li> <li>How can I gather information and give credit to other authors?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</b></li> <li><b>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.</b></li> <li><b>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.</b></li> <li>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</li> <li><b>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.</b></li> <li>Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).</li> </ul>

<b>Enduring Understandings</b> In order to meet the standards, the students will need to understand that . . .	<b>Essential Questions</b> In order to understand, students will need to consider questions such as . . .	<b>Knowledge and Skills</b> Learning this material will require students to . . . <i>*<b>Boldface type indicates emphasis</b></i>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text. Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Read and comprehend literature and informational text at or above grade level independently and proficiently.</li> <li>• <b>Engage flexibly in critical thinking while reading (active reading).</b></li> <li>• <b>Draw parallels between their lives, the world around them, and literature.</b></li> </ul>

### Writing: Argument, Informational/Expository and Narrative Writing Skills

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing is a recursive process that involves multiple revisions.</li> <li>• Using the techniques of literature such as following a particular structure, using precise working, and including sensory details will help keep the interest of my reader.</li> <li>• Each type of writing has a unique structure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the steps of the writing process, and how can they help me?</li> <li>• How can I use writing to express my experience of the world and get and keep the interest of my reader?</li> <li>• How do I focus and organize my writing to suit my audience and purpose?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.</li> <li>• <b>Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.</b></li> <li>• <b>Introduce a topic; organize ideas, concepts, and information</b></li> <li>• <b>Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.</b></li> <li>• <b>Use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.</b></li> <li>• <b>Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.</b></li> <li>• <b>Establish and maintain a formal style.</b></li> <li>• <b>Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented.</b></li> <li>• <b>Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.</b></li> </ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.</li> <li>• <b>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.</b></li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• <b>Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.</b></li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• <b>Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</b></li> <li>• 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</li> </ul>

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		<p>tasks, purposes, and audiences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Use sensory detail for the purpose of engaging the reader in original descriptive writing.</b></li><li>• <b>Understand how to grab and hold the audience's attention in writing and speaking.</b></li></ul>

### Speaking and Listening

<b>Enduring Understandings</b> In order to meet the standards, the students will need to understand that . . .	<b>Essential Questions</b> In order to understand, students will need to consider questions such as . . .	<b>Knowledge and Skills</b> Learning this material will require students to . . . <i>*Boldface type indicates emphasis</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speaking, listening, and discussing allow one to clarify thinking and make connections to the world and each other.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why are some leaders more successful at gaining followers than others?</li> <li>How do I get and keep my audience's attention?</li> <li>How is a great idea created and realized ?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.</b></li> <li>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.</li> <li>Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.</li> <li>Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.</li> <li>Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, images, music, sound) and visual displays in presentations to clarify information.</li> <li>Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.</li> </ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Get and hold the reader’s attention using appropriate volume, eye contact, visuals, etc.</b></li><li>• <b>Exchange ideas with others using clear speaking and active listening skills such as asking follow up questions, paraphrasing, etc.</b></li></ul>



## Language Standards

<b>Enduring Understandings</b> In order to meet the standards, the students will need to understand that . . .	<b>Essential Questions</b> In order to understand, students will need to consider questions such as . . .	<b>Knowledge and Skills</b> Learning this material will require students to . . . <i>*Boldface type indicates emphasis</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conventions are rules that have been established to standardize written communication.</li> <li>A writer or a speaker needs to use standard English conventions and proper grammar to get his/her message across effectively.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How can a writer be sure that his or her writing will be understood by a reader?</li> <li>Why is it important to apply standard English conventions?</li> <li></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.</b></li> <li><b>Ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, possessive).</b></li> <li>Use intensive pronouns (e.g., <i>myself</i>, <i>ourselves</i>).</li> <li>Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.*</li> <li><b>Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).</b></li> <li><b>Recognize variations from standard English in their own and others' writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.</b></li> <li><b>Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.</b></li> <li>Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.</li> <li>Spell correctly.</li> <li>Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.</li> </ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style.</li> <li>• Maintain consistency in style and tone.</li> <li>• <b>Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</b></li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., <i>audience</i>, <i>auditory</i>, <i>audible</i>).</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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).</li> <li>• <b>Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</b></li> <li>• <b>Interpret figures of speech (e.g., personification) in context.</b></li> </ul>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words.</li> <li>• 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>).</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>