



INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE

Unit Overview

Grade 6: English/Language Arts

Unit 1: Convincing Arguments

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Using This Resource




The Unit Overview provides all the standards and learning targets that should be taught over the course of the unit. It is designed to be used in conjunction with the Unit-at-a-Glance. Teachers should refer to the Overview to locate specific standards and their corresponding learning targets when designing lesson plans and assessments. *While Text Suggestions are provided throughout the unit, they are intended as suggestions only. We recognize that elements of these texts are controversial; however, we intentionally left them in this unit for their educational value and the teaching moments they present. Individual teachers should use their discretion when selecting texts to meet their students' needs. The additional resources included in the Overview promote the most effective research-based teaching practices and should be considered when planning and assessing students.

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Unit Overview

“Argument is the soul of an education. It is the reason for schooling: to provide our youth with the knowledge and will to participate in the great experiment; to teach them how to argue and help them discover what questions are worth arguing about.” – Neil Postman, 1997

*“Argument writing is the heart of critical thinking and academic discourse; it is the kind of writing students need to know for success in college and life — the kind of writing that Common Core State Standards puts first.” – George Hillocks, *Teaching Argument Writing*, 2011*

On the doorstep to adolescence, sixth-graders find themselves at a particularly vulnerable developmental stage. They have begun to emerge from the haven of childhood and experience the responsibilities of adulthood. They seek their own unique identity while needing and valuing approval from peer groups.

These young people are also functioning in a world flooded by persuasive appeals, most of which are unsupported by factual evidence or logical reasoning. At the same time, they must work and live amid the real-time demands of complex technology in a litigious society that constantly attempts to persuade the consumer to buy products, use websites and constantly search for the next best “thing” that will bring happiness. Thus, students of today who are the workers of tomorrow must be able to read critically, detect bias and evaluate sources in order to make effective decisions based on reliable evidence and/or reasoned judgments.

This introduction to argument centers around issues presented in the text *Esperanza Rising*. Understanding the greater context around the text helps students develop empathy while examining the rapidly changing demographics of America. Through the study of a wide variety of multidisciplinary texts, both print and nonprint, students learn to distinguish between superficial persuasion and well-developed arguments. As a result, these 21st-century skills are reinforced over the course of the unit: critical thinking and problem solving, collaboration, social responsibility, communicating, digital literacy, creativity, and leadership.

While the unit centers on a specific text, the instructional methods and resources can be tailored to fit any text, with the understanding that a text never functions in isolation. It is a product shaped by a writer who is influenced by culture, society and politics. This first unit is also rich in standards and should provide a strong foundation for upcoming units, as all standards for Grade 6 are addressed.

Essential Questions

(There are multiple questions throughout the unit. The ones below reflect the larger ideas presented each week.)

- How do our experiences influence our perceptions and interpretations?
- How does perseverance lead to accomplishment?
- What is the difference between argument and persuasion?
- What responsibilities does a writer or speaker have to an audience?
- How does perspective shape or alter the truth?
- How do we decide if the world today is better or worse than it was in the past?
- What are the different reasons immigrants come to the United States?
- What role does the media play in shaping the public's opinion on immigration?

Standards and Learning Targets

Reading Literature (RL)

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
RL.1	Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrate comprehension of a text with after-reading strategies by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Explaining the main ideas. ▶ Identifying what is directly stated in the text. ▶ Drawing inferences. ▶ Drawing conclusions. ▶ Verifying or adjusting predictions. ▶ Making new predictions. ▶ Paraphrasing and summarizing. ▶ Making connections between the text and oneself. ● Determine and state evidence that confirms the important ideas and messages of a literary text. ● Identify evidence to suggest logically what might be true about characters, setting, plot, etc. ● Distinguish between connotations and denotations of words for understanding. ● Participate actively and appropriately in discussions about literary texts. ● Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. ● Use appropriate general academic or domain-specific words when discussing or writing about literature.
RL.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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use significant details of characterization and/or plot development, and repeated words, ideas and/or symbols, as clues to theme. ● Connect conclusions about character/s, plot and/or symbols to determine theme. ● Present details to accentuate support of main ideas or themes. ● Distinguish between subjective and objective summaries. ● Paraphrase significant events or details from a text. ● Review key ideas expressed through paraphrasing.

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● State or compose a summary that includes events from the beginning, middle and end of a text. ● Use a variety of transition words to convey sequence. ● Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. ● Use appropriate general academic or domain-specific words when discussing or writing about literature.
RL.3	Describe how the plot of a particular story or drama unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Apply the basic elements of plot structure in a description of a story's plot. ● Apply the basic elements of plot structure and drama structure in a description of a drama's plot. ● Apply the elements of characterization in a description of character development. ● Use a variety of transition words to convey sequence. ● Use precise words and descriptive details to convey events. ● Give a conclusion that follows from events. ● Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. ● Use appropriate general academic or domain-specific words correctly when writing about or discussing literature.
RL.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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use evidence from a literary text to support analysis of word choice. ● Examine the author's word choice as an indicator of tone. ● Use the author's word choice as an indicator of tone. ● Use context as a clue to the meaning of words and phrases. ● Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., audience, auditory, audible). (CCSS L.6) ● Verify an inferred meaning of a word or phrase in a dictionary. (CCSS L.6) ● Demonstrate an understanding of figurative language and connotation.

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
RL.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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrate an understanding of the structure of novels, dramas and poetry. ● Determine how the particular parts of a novel, drama or poem relate to each other to form a complete structure. ● Connect knowledge (details) of literary structures and literary elements to determine how they work together to form or advance the plot, setting or theme of a literary text. ● Determine how a theme is relayed through particular details in a literary text. ● Describe how a literary text develops in a series of episodes. ● Use knowledge of narrative techniques as a means to comprehend events in literary texts. ● Use evidence from literary texts to support analysis of text structure.
RL.6	Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text. Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Apply knowledge of the different types of point of view to a text. ● Determine the narrator/speaker by combining knowledge of point of view and person in personal pronouns.
RL.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 or what they perceive when they listen or watch.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrate the behaviors of a strategic reader, viewer or listener to a given literary text. ● Demonstrate knowledge of various media capabilities when listening to or viewing a dramatization of a literary text. ● Compare the reading of a literary text versus listening to or viewing a dramatization of a literary text. ● Compare the differences between what the reader imagines visually and aurally when reading a literary text to the dramatization of those sights and sounds from a literary text. Support ideas with relevant evidence. ● Use evidence from literary texts to support reflection. ● Use details presented in diverse media and formats. ● Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use appropriate general academic or domain-specific words when discussing or writing about literature.
RL.9	Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems, historical novels, fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrate the behaviors of a strategic reader to a given literary text. ● Compare texts addressing comparable topics, ideas or themes but written in different genres. ● Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Reading Informational Text (RI)

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
RI.1	Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Apply appropriate before-reading strategies in a text, e.g., previewing the text, setting a purpose for reading, making predictions about the text, and drawing connections between prior knowledge or experience and the text. ● Monitor comprehension with appropriate during-reading strategies, e.g., rereading, paraphrasing, summarizing, connecting related ideas within a text, verifying or modifying predictions, visualizing, and connecting text ideas with prior knowledge or experience. ● Demonstrate comprehension of a text with after-reading strategies by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Explaining the main ideas. ▶ Identifying what is directly stated in the text. ▶ Drawing inferences. ▶ Drawing conclusions. ▶ Verifying or adjusting predictions. ▶ Making new predictions. ▶ Paraphrasing and summarizing. ▶ Making connections between the text and oneself. ● Use relationships between words for understanding. ● Participate actively and appropriately in discussions about informational texts. ● Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use appropriate general academic or domain-specific words when discussing or writing about informational texts.
RI.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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use significant pieces of information as clues to a main idea. ● Synthesize main ideas to determine a central idea. ● Distinguish between subjective and objective summaries. ● Paraphrase significant information from an informational text. ● Review key ideas expressed through paraphrasing.
RI.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).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify important people, events or ideas in an informational text. ● Determine the variety of ways that a person, event or idea may be described or explained to a reader. ● Examine the specific ways an important person, event or idea in the text is presented to a reader. ● Apply knowledge of organizational patterns by identification of strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast and cause/effect.
RI.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative and technical meanings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use evidence from an informational text to determine the meaning of a word or phrase. ● Use context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
RI.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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Determine the general organizational pattern of a grade-appropriate informational text, e.g., transition words and phrases indicating chronological order, cause/effect, problem/solution, etc. ● Identify the author's purpose for a grade-appropriate informational text. ● Examine how parts of the text support the identified purpose of the text. ● Use evidence from informational texts to support analysis of text structure. ● Use grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words when explaining the role of portions of the text.

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
RI.6	Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text, and explain how it is conveyed in the text.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Determine the difference between author's point of view and author's purpose. ● Determine author's point of view through attention to word choice, punctuation and emphasis on ideas. ● Determine author's purpose through attention to formal text features and key ideas.
RI.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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Compare and contrast information received through different formats. ● Organize information from different formats to develop a logical understanding of a topic or issue. ● Support ideas with relevant evidence. ● Use information presented in diverse media and formats.
RI.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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrate knowledge of the organizational pattern of an argument. ● Identify claims in the text. ● Identify supported claims versus unsupported claims in the text. ● Assess the value of the argument based upon supported claims. ● Use knowledge of words, phrases and clauses to clarify the relationship between claims and support. ● Delineate an argument and specific claims, showing the difference between claims that are supported and those that are not.
RI.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).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrate knowledge of primary and secondary sources. ● Explain the likenesses and differences between the main ideas or information from one author versus another. ● Support ideas with relevant evidence. ● Present findings using pertinent evidence.

Writing (W)

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
W.1	Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claims from alternative or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Adapt the prewriting stage of the writing process to an argument, including developing one or more claims, and effectively ordering reasons that support the claim. ▶ Gather information to support claims. ▶ Compose a draft of an introduction that presents a claim or claims clearly. ● Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Show knowledge of a topic or text by selecting appropriate evidence to support a claim or claims. (CCSS 6 W.7) ▶ Locate and evaluate sources for reliability to select evidence. ▶ Compose a draft of the body with attention to organization, varying sentence patterns, and recognition of inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person. ● Use words, phrases and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Combine ideas with the appropriate word or words that explain the connections between claims and reasons. ▶ Apply academic vocabulary to express relationships precisely.
W.2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Combine ideas with the appropriate word or words that explain the connections between claims and reasons.
W.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Apply knowledge of plot development and its effect upon shifts in characterization.

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
	and well-structured event sequences.	
W.4	With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See W.1, W.2 and W.7 of CCSS for specific application.
W.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.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See W.1, W.2 and W.7 of CCSS for specific application.
W.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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use technology to enhance learning and collaboration. Use technology to locate, evaluate and organize information. Use keyboard and mouse effectively and efficiently.
W.7	Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define a problem, formulate questions, and refine a problem and/or question. Find data and information within a variety of digital and print sources.
W.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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locate and evaluate resources. Develop search term vocabulary and searching strategies. Take purposeful notes by direct quoting, paraphrasing or drawing conclusions. Evaluate and analyze the quality, accuracy and sufficiency of notes. Use appropriate bibliographic information for sources.

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
W.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write in response to grade-level print, nonprint, and digital literary or informational text(s).
W.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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjust the writing process as necessary for different grade-appropriate writing tasks, purposes and audiences. Set and adjust personal goals, and conference regularly with adults and peers to identify and address writing deficiencies.

Speaking and Listening (SL)

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
SL.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussion (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 ideas clearly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate the behaviors of an effective student by completing and reflecting on assigned reading. Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. Take purposeful notes in preparation for discussion, using highlighting, outlines, journals and other techniques as appropriate. Identify the main ideas under discussion, and apply higher-order questions that yield a deeper analysis of those ideas. Conduct focused research as necessary to prepare for discussions. Access prior knowledge to extend the topic under discussion.
SL.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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply an understanding of the features and formats of diverse media. Determine both the explicit and the implicit ideas found in nonprint texts, including digital texts. Summarize, compare, draw conclusions about, and synthesize significant ideas found in print and nonprint texts, including digital media.

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
SL.3	Delineate a speaker’s argument and specific claims, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Apply critical listening strategies to determine the speaker’s argument and claims. ● 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. ● Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text, and explain how it is conveyed in the text. ● 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. ● Align specific claims to their supporting reasons to identify gaps in support.
SL.4	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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adopt the behaviors of effective speakers as appropriate to task, purpose and audience. ● Apply an organizational pattern that most effectively emphasizes the main ideas or themes of the presentation. ● Include support (e.g., descriptions, facts, details) that most effectively emphasizes main ideas or themes of the presentation. ● Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
SL.5	Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, images, music, sound) and visual displays in presentations to clarify information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Select or create multimedia and visual displays that enhance presentations and/or clarify ideas.
SL.6	Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrate control of spoken language by adjusting speech to varying contexts and tasks.

Language (L)

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
L.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Apply an understanding of the relationship between the use and form of personal pronouns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Subjective pronouns as subjects and predicate nominatives. ▶ Objective pronouns as objects of prepositions and direct and indirect objects. ▶ Possessive pronouns as adjectives. ● Analyze professional, peer and student’s own writing for correct use of pronoun case. ● Demonstrate command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. ● Spell correctly. ● Apply an understanding of the difference in purpose and function between a reflexive and an intensive pronoun. ● Analyze the effect of intensive pronouns on meaning or tone in professional, peer, and student’s own writing. Demonstrate command of standard English by using intensive pronouns correctly, e.g., himself vs. hisself, themselves vs. theirselves. ● Use precise language to inform or explain. ● Develop and strengthen writing by editing for clarity. ● Analyze the effect of pronouns and their antecedents on meaning in professional, peer and student’s own writing. ● Apply skills from L.1 to analyze the effect on meaning in professional writing, the writing of peers and student’s own writing.
L.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation and spelling when writing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Apply an understanding of the choices and functions among punctuation to set off nonrestrictive elements. ● Analyze professional, peer and student’s own writing to determine the effect of punctuation upon meaning. ● Strengthen writing by editing for correct punctuation to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements. ● Spell correctly grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words. ● Use print and digital resources and internalized knowledge to support correct spelling.

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify capitalization rules for dialogue. ● Demonstrate correct placement of commas and quotation marks in dialogue. ● Analyze writing models for the correct use of punctuation in dialogue. ● Modify spelling of base words as needed when adding inflectional endings and suffixes. ● Analyze writing models for correct spelling of high frequency words.
L.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading or listening.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Apply an understanding of audience and the purpose of speech or writing and their effect upon its meaning. ● Apply understanding of various sentence patterns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Reordering words. ▶ Adjusting length of sentences. ▶ Adding words, phrases/clauses. ● Analyze professional, peer, and student's own writing or speech to determine the effect various sentence patterns have upon meaning, interest and style. ● Strengthen writing by revising sentence patterns for interest and style. ● Apply an understanding of audience, purpose, and format to determine style and tone. ● Establish and maintain a formal style. ● Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks. ● Use precise word choice to establish and maintain tone.
L.4	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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Apply an understanding of the various types of context clues to determine word or phrase meaning. ● Apply an understanding of inference and drawing conclusions to determine word or phrase meaning. ● Apply an understanding of basic word parts as clues to word meaning. ● Apply an understanding of root word families to determine the meaning of a word. ● Strengthen writing by using reference materials both print and digital to refine word choices. ● Apply an understanding of the skills in L.4 a-c to verify word meaning.

Code	Standard	Learning Targets
L.5	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships and nuances in word meanings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Apply knowledge of figurative language including personification to a critical reading of a text. ● Use sensory language to convey experiences and events. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text including figurative language. ● Analyze professional, peer and student's own writing to determine how figurative language contributes to meaning. ● Apply an understanding of connections between words, including cause/effect part/whole and item/category, to a critical reading of a text. ● Analyze professional, peer and student's own writing to determine how word relationships contribute to meaning. ● Apply an understanding of connotation to judge word choice. ● Use precise words to convey experiences and events. ● Analyze professional, peer and student's own writing to determine how word choice contributes to meaning.
L.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; garner vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Apply skills identified in CCSS L.4 and L.5 to increase vocabulary and differentiate between word choices to improve writing and speaking.

Unit Assessments and Rubrics

Pre-Assessments and Formative Assessments

(Note: Depending upon the instructional purpose, any one of these may be used as a pre-, formative or summative assessment. Below are only suggested uses as reflected in the unit.)

- Analysis of conceptual terms framing the weeks (perspective, mindset, perseverance, motivation, audience, changing perspectives, past influencing present)
- Background knowledge of the context around a text (Mexican Revolution)

- Beginning-of-the-year assessments (Spelling Inventories, Fountas & Pinnell Reading Assessments, writing samples, etc.)
- Guided note-taking
- Observations of student analysis of nonprint texts/nonprint paired with print texts
- Observations of student discussions
- Participation in interactive sharing and analyses of advertisements
- Questions for the Socratic Seminar anchored to issues in *Esperanza Rising*
- Reading comprehension of informational texts
- Socratic Seminar Background and Guidelines (modified version for scaffolding purposes)
- Socratic Seminar Rubric

Summative Assessments

- Carousel Brainstorm
- Cause-effect organizer
- Jigsaw
- Language quizzes (phrases)
- Making connections graphic organizer
- Paired Reading
- Quick Writes
- See-Think-Wonder (nonprint analysis)
- Small-group discussions using Socratic Seminar stems
- Spider Web graphic organizer
- Student-developed arguments
- Socratic Seminar discussion participation as evaluated by participant and teacher

Vocabulary

High-frequency “Tier 2” words and academic vocabulary should be taught explicitly, as students need to understand and apply these words across all content-areas in various situations. For more information on how to teach vocabulary while using standards, visit the following websites:

- www.edutopia.org/blog/teaching-ccss-critical-vocabulary-marilee-sprenger
- www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/sept09/vol67/num01/Six-Steps-to-Better-Vocabulary-Instruction.aspx
- achievethecore.org/aligned/including-tier-2-vocabulary-instruction-in-curricular-materials/

- Argument
- Audience
- Claim
- Connotation
- Counterclaim
- Denotation
- Evidence
- Inference
- Judgment
- Main idea
- Mindset
- Mood
- Perseverance
- Perspective
- Persuasion
- Socratic Seminar
- Summary
- Symbol
- Theme

Text Suggestions

The following texts have been chosen for their Lexile levels, interest levels and ease for planning to multiple standards. To find an up-to-date list of vetted texts — which clearly center diversity, equity and inclusion — visit our list of [Culturally Responsive Text Suggestions](#).

See *Appendix A: Text Complexity Considerations* for information on how to select complex text. Some Lexile (L) levels and Guided Reading Levels (GR) are listed below for reference.

Theme-Related

A Wolf at the Door and Other Retold Fairy Tales by Ellen Datlow and Terri Windling (790L)

Aesop’s Fables: “The Lion and the Mouse” and “The Hare with Many Friends”

Artemis Fowl: The Graphic Novel by Eoin Colfer (GN460L)

Dr. Rabbit by Eric B. Hare

Elijah of Buxton by Christopher Paul Curtis (980L)

Esperanza Rising by Pam Munoz Ryan

Flipped by Wendelin Van Draanan

“Funeral” by Ralph Fletcher

Harlem Summer by Walter Dean Myers

If a Tree Falls at Lunch Period by Gennifer Choldenko (530L)
Interpretation of Aristotle’s Essays on Friendship from *Nicomachean Ethics*: Book VIII
Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key by Jack Gantos (890L)
Nothing But the Truth by Avi
Schooled by Gordon Korman
Tangerine by Edward Bloor
The Door in the Wall by Marguerite de Angeli (920L)
The Extraordinary Mark Twain (According to Susy) by Barbara Kerley (AD1090L)
The Misfits by James Howe
The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton
The Titanic by Deborah Kent
Ungifted by Gordon Korman (730L)
Voices in the Park by Anthony Browne (children’s book that demonstrates point of view) (560L)
When Zachary Beaver Came to Town by Kimberly Willis Holt

Teacher Resources: Educator Websites

(Websites change frequently. Check sites ahead of time for content and accuracy. Some website information has been saved as a PDF file or on slides. YouTube videos are often accompanied by a student handout modeled after the materials on the segment.)

- Ice breakers: www.signupgenius.com/school/icebreaker-activities-middle-school-high-school.cfm, with handout
- Semantic mapping: www.readingrockets.org/article/connecting-word-meanings-through-semantic-mapping
- Children of the [Mexican] Revolution: www.pbs.org/video/children-of-the-revolucion-anticipating-a-revolution/
- Mindset (teacher resource): malcolmocean.com/2014/07/growth-mindset-reframing/
- Students overcoming obstacles: www.universities.com/articles/10-students-who-overcame-massive-obstacles-to-achieve-their-dream-of-an-education/, with handout
- Parts of an argument: www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ZFIL-A6r08, with handout
- Language (teacher and student resource): www.ixl.com/ela/grade-6
- Conducting an interview: www.youtube.com/watch?v=WS6fFL9eliU, with handout

Lesson Sequence — Unit Progression

The Unit Progression gives weekly examples of how to teach to the unit-specific Learning Targets over the course of nine weeks. Teachers should adjust the pace as needed for their individual classes.

Week-by-Week

This unit starts at the beginning of the school year and goes into the month of October. Weeks are framed by Essential Questions reflecting a concept: perspective, mindset, perseverance, motivation, audience, changing perspective and the connection of past to present. During Week 1, students learn about the background of a text. The emphasis is on the Mexican Revolution and the war between the elite and working classes, as it relates to *Esperanza Rising*. However, contextualization of **any** text can be studied by using a variety of print and nonprint works. For example, if *Schooled* by Gordon Korman were chosen as the anchor text, discussions could be framed by an in-depth study of traditional versus nontraditional schooling, focusing on progressive philosophies shaping many homeschooling frameworks. In Week 9, when students are expected to design and implement their own Socratic Seminar, discussions for *Schooled* could center on the general debate between traditional schools versus progressive academic measures. Therefore, any text chosen for Unit 1 could work with the instructional measures shared each week.

Aligning language with perspective during Week 1 introduces students to the connection between language choices and persuasive measures. Introduced early on are slides taken from the language component of the Common Core State Standards as a reminder of which areas to address. However, a proactive attempt at studying phrases (prepositional, noun, adjectival and adverbial) in this unit will provide a foundation for a more in-depth study in Grade 7.

During Week 2, the text *Esperanza Rising* is introduced and framed by the concept of mindset. Students can begin to examine the text by understanding the characters' mindsets, as their lives drastically change over the course of the novel. Furthermore, perseverance and motivation, taught during Weeks 3 and 4, are crucial factors in developing the characters. Throughout the unit, scaffolds are built into lessons to prepare students for the Socratic Seminar, and the use of multidisciplinary texts continues to help students understand the context around the text. More important, however, are the skills connected to these text sets, as students will learn the basics of developing a successful argument by examining perspective and motivation. They will discover factors that motivate people to behave in a specific way. Addressing the basic components of an argument, with an emphasis on claim and counterclaim, will help shape the process for students and provide them with new academic vocabulary.

During Weeks 5 and 6, students continue to make connections between concepts and the novel. The concepts taught — audience and changing perspectives — also directly relate to argument. For example, well-constructed arguments appeal to a specific audience. Therefore, understanding the audience's perspective is essential in crafting a successful argument. Furthermore, as students begin to prepare for their Socratic Seminar, their own perspective may change as they're introduced to more information. Developing empathy is often a result of a changing perspective. As a result, connecting students to real-life situations makes learning relevant.

Weeks 7 through 9 focus more heavily on the Socratic Seminar method as students begin to connect the dots between past events and present-day issues revolving around immigration. Students continue to develop empathy by learning from the experiences, both positive and negative, of immigrants from all over the world. Incorporating the basics of research to continue to support the context around an issue is suggested, as the following unit focuses on retrieving and analyzing reliable sources. Gradually releasing students to design and practice modified Socratic Seminars reinforces the expectation that they are responsible for their own learning by putting theory into practice.

Sprinkled throughout the unit are reminders that language use is purposeful. Therefore, choosing words that spark civil discourse is encouraged. Furthermore, continuing to reinforce how texts represent the perspective of a writer will remind students that civil discourse results from respectfully responding to those with different viewpoints.

Appendix A: Text Complexity Considerations

When selecting books, text complexity matters. According to the Common Core State Standards Initiative, three factors should be considered when the teacher is choosing texts: 1) Qualitative Measures, 2) Quantitative Measures, and 3) Reader and Task Considerations. For more information on these measures, see the following website: www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/standard-10-range-quality-complexity/measuring-text-complexity-three-factors/.

As a result of research conducted in 2013 on text complexity, updated information was added to Appendix A of the CCSS to reflect the new expectations required of students in order to meet College and Career Readiness (CCR) by high school graduation. The table below shows the six different measures found reliable for measuring text complexity and their corresponding grade levels.

Common Core Band	ATOS (Accelerated Reader)	Degrees of Reading Power®	Flesch-Kincaid	The Lexile Framework®	Reading Maturity	Text Evaluator
2nd-3rd	2.75 – 5.14	42 – 54	1.98 – 5.34	420 – 820	3.53 – 6.13	100 – 590
4th-5th	4.97 – 7.03	52 – 60	4.51 – 7.73	740 – 1010	5.42 – 7.92	405 – 720
6th-8th	7.00 – 9.98	57 – 67	6.51 – 10.34	925 – 1185	7.04 – 9.57	550 – 940
9th-10th	9.67 – 12.01	62 – 72	8.32 – 12.12	1050 – 1335	8.41 – 10.81	750 – 1125
11th-CCR	11.20 – 14.10	67 – 74	10.34 – 14.20	1185 – 1385	9.57 – 12.00	890 – 1360

Table 1: Updated Text Complexity Grade Bands and Associated Ranges From Multiple Measures, taken from www.corestandards.org/wp-content/uploads/Appendix-A-New-Research-on-Text-Complexity-revised.pdf, which can be found on the website www.corestandards.org/other-resources/.

Appendix B: Instructional Strategies for Diverse Learners

When choosing instructional strategies, teachers should consider the multiple learning styles, backgrounds and abilities of all students. Research shows that to promote ELA/literacy skills, teachers should incorporate a mix of whole-group, peer-paired and independent activities into instructional procedures. Below is a list of research-based strategies recommended to promote literacy skills in the five essential areas of reading (comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, phonics and phonemic awareness).

Comprehension Strategies

- KWL Charts, Venn Diagrams, T-charts, etc.
- Interactive Read-Alouds, Think-Alouds, etc.
- Story Boards, Sketch to Stretch, etc.
- Question-Answer-Relationship (QAR) (e.g., www.youtube.com/watch?v=wsud7AQWva8)
- Focus Questions

Comprehension Strategies with Cooperative Learning (Collaboration)

- Guided Reading, Literature Circles, Book Talks, etc.
- Readers Theater, Role Play, Reciprocal Reading, etc.
- Shared/Buddy/Paired Reading
- Think-Pair-Share, Turn-and-Talk, etc.
- Jigsaw (e.g., www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/nov18/vol76/num03/Let's-Get-Jigsaw-Right.aspx)
- Socratic Seminar (grade 2: www.youtube.com/watch?v=zBfH_fhAme0; for older students: www.youtube.com/watch?v=69Qv3l0nuNg)
- Fishbowl
- Four Corners (e.g., www.youtube.com/watch?v=M2XmJQ9FL5A)
- Gallery Walk (e.g., www.youtube.com/watch?v=nNT3PZP2obU)

Vocabulary Strategies

- Word Walls
- Word Analysis, Word Sorts (e.g., Making Words), Word Games (e.g., UpWords, BINGO)
- Word Ladders
- Concept Mapping (great for ELL students/differentiation), Concept Circles, Frayer Model, etc.

- Alpha Boxes (e.g., www.youtube.com/watch?v=iBGB7CiN0bQ)
- List-Group-Label (e.g., www.youtube.com/watch?v=K731qicwYcY)
- Non-Linguistic Strategies (visuals)
- Analogies, Connect-Two, etc.

Fluency Strategies

- Daily Read-Alouds, Think-Alouds, etc.
- Record Self/Listen to Self
- Listen to Stories Using Technology
- Repeated Readings
- Choral Reading

Phonemic Awareness/Phonics Strategies

- Making Words
- Word Ladders
- Centers/Literacy Stations
- Guided Reading
- Interactive Writing

