NSCAS Summative Assessment

English Language Arts

Item Specifications

Grade 6

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Stimuli for Assessing ELA Standards

The 2021 revised Nebraska College and Career Ready Standards for English Language Arts (ELA) illustrate a text-centered approach to instruction in which all students become proficient readers through deliberate practice, and all students have access to grade-level, complex texts. Since high-quality, grade-level complex texts provide the basis for instruction in reading and other ELA domains such as vocabulary acquisition, text complexity will also be integral to the assessment of ELA standards. This introductory section of the item specifications document provides guidelines on the length, text complexity, and genres of stimuli to be used for assessing ELA standards. It also provides an overview of available item types.

Reading Standards

The purpose of the **Reading Prose and Poetry** and **Reading Informational Text** standards is for students to learn and apply reading skills and strategies to comprehend grade-level literary and informational texts. For this reason, measures of text complexity must be aligned with college and career readiness expectations for all students.

The **Lexile** guidelines in the table below are based on the range and complexity of texts outlined in the revised standards, which move students to proficiency as they progress through the grades. Meanwhile, the **Word Count** guidelines are based on the type of passage—**common stimulus** or **standalone**—and its intended use in the assessment. **Common Stimulus** passages are longer texts that are used to assess multiple Reading and Vocabulary standards. Students are asked to read a text and answer several questions that explore the text's central idea(s) and key particulars. **Standalone** passages are much shorter texts that assess just one Reading, Vocabulary, or Writing standard.

Grade	Common Stimulus Passages for Reading				Standalone Passages for Reading			
	Word Count		Lexile		Word Count		Lexile	
	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
3	200	650	420	820	31	125	420	820
4	450	750	740	1010	38	150	740	1010
5	450	750	740	1010	38	150	740	1010
6	650	950	925	1185	50	200	925	1185
7	650	950	925	1185	50	200	925	1185
8	650	950	925	1185	50	200	925	1185

Vocabulary Standards

The purpose of the **Vocabulary** standards is for students to build and use **conversational**, **academic**, and **discipline-specific**, grade-level vocabulary.

- o **Conversational vocabulary** refers to words used in everyday, real-life situations.
- o **Academic vocabulary** refers to words likely to appear in a variety of content area texts.
- o **Discipline-specific vocabulary** refers to words with precise meanings in one content area.

To assess vocabulary standards, target words/phrases must be embedded in context-rich assets that enable students to determine the word/phrase's meaning through context clues or other word-solving strategies (e.g., morphology, word relationships). Whenever possible, vocabulary should be assessed within the context of grade-level complex texts, after doing a careful review of challenging language that is central to understanding the meaning of the text, including figurative language. In addition, many of the vocabulary standards require that stimuli have above-grade-level words so that students must use context clues or other word-solving strategies to determine meaning.

Depending on the type of passage—**common stimulus** or **standalone**—being used to assess a specific vocabulary standard, follow the **Lexile** and **Word Count** guidelines in the table below. **Common Stimulus** passages are longer texts that are used to assess multiple Reading and Vocabulary standards. Students are asked to read a text and answer several questions that explore the text's central idea(s) and key particulars, including its vocabulary. **Standalone passages** are much shorter texts that assess just one Vocabulary standard.

Grade	Common Stimulus Passages for Vocabulary				Standalone Passages for Vocabulary			
	Word Count		Lexile		Word Count		Lexile	
	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
3	200	650	420	820	31	125	420	820
4	450	750	740	1010	38	150	740	1010
5	450	750	740	1010	38	150	740	1010
6	650	950	925	1185	50	200	925	1185
7	650	950	925	1185	50	200	925	1185
8	650	950	925	1185	50	200	925	1185

Writing Standards

The purpose of the **Writing** standards is for students to learn and apply writing skills and strategies to communicate effectively for a variety of purposes.

Production of Writing Standards

The **Production of Writing** standards focus on writing skills and strategies related to **grammar**, **usage**, and **mechanics**.

- o **Grammar** is the rules by which sentences are constructed.
- o **Usage** is the way words and phrases are commonly used.
- o **Mechanics** are norms of written language and include only spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

Stimuli used to assess the Production of Writing standards should be as short as possible, and some standards may require no stimulus. However, other standards may require assets ranging from a short sentence to a short paragraph to assess the targeted writing skill. For example, an item might ask students to correctly place prepositional phrases within a sentence or identify and fix errors in pronoun-antecedent agreement within a short paragraph. In these cases, follow the **Lexile** and **Word Count** guidelines in the table below.

Grade	Stimuli for Writing Standards			
	Word Count		Lexile	
	Min	Max	Min	Max
3	N/A	125	365	565
4	N/A	150	420	820
5	N/A	150	420	820
6	N/A	200	740	1010
7	N/A	200	740	1010
8	N/A	200	740	1010

Modes of Writing Standards

The Modes of Writing standards focus on four broad modes of writing—**Narrative, Opinion** (3–5) **or Argumentative** (6–8), **Informative/Explanatory**, and **Research**. The forms that might be used to assess each genre are as follows:

- o **Narrative forms** include but are not limited to: short stories, personal narratives, fables, myths, tall tales, fairy tales, plays, poetry, autobiography, biography, essays, screenplays, narrative nonfiction, realistic fiction, historical accounts, memoirs, nonlinear narratives, legends, epics, and ballads.

- o **Opinion, or argumentative, forms** include but are not limited to: personal opinion pieces, appeals, editorials, proposals, personal essays, speeches, letters, literary analyses, and persuasive and op-ed pieces.

- o **Informative/explanatory forms** include, but are not limited to: descriptive essays, comparative analyses, historical reports, manuals, process pieces, journal, magazine, and newspaper articles, memorandums, scientific reports, compare/contrast, problem/solution, and cause/effect essays.

When deciding what form to use, consider the grade-level appropriateness or the form and how well the form can assess the given standard.

Research standards emphasize the importance of conducting short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question or solve a problem. They focus on gathering relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assessing the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrating the information while avoiding plagiarism. While many research standards are assessed locally, items on state summative tests may give students a research scenario and ask them to do a specific research task (e.g., take notes, organize information, paraphrase details from a source without altering the meaning).

Stimuli used to assess the Modes of Writing standards should be an excerpt of writing that represents the work of a high-achieving student at the target grade level.

To ensure items assess the writing standards without inadvertently assessing the reading standards too, follow the **Lexile** and **Word Count** guidelines in the table below. In general, stimuli should be as short as possible but as long as necessary to assess the targeted writing skill.

Grade	Stimuli for Writing Standards			
	Word Count		Lexile	
	Min	Max	Min	Max
3	N/A	125	365	565
4	N/A	150	420	820
5	N/A	150	420	820
6	N/A	200	740	1010
7	N/A	200	740	1010
8	N/A	200	740	1010

Item Types for Assessing ELA Standards

The following item types are available for assessing ELA standards.

Multiple-Choice (Choice): Students select one response from multiple options. (1 pt)

Multi-select (Choice Multiple): Students select two or more responses from multiple options. Some multi-select items are also two-point items for which students can earn partial credit. (1–2 pts)

Hot Text: Students select a response from within a piece of text or a table of information (e.g., word, section of a passage, number, symbol, or equation), which highlights the selected text. Some hot text items are also two-point items for which students can earn partial credit. (1–2 pts)

Composite: Students interact with multiple interaction types included within a single item. Students may receive partial credit for composite items. (always 2 pts)

Gap Match: Students select an option or options in an area called the toolbar and move or "drag and drop" these options (e.g., words, phrases, sentences, quotations) into a defined area, or "gap." (1–2 pts)

Constructed Response: Students can write a short text of 1–2 sentences in response to a question assessing a Modes of Writing standard.

There are three main considerations when deciding which item type to use:

1. **Consider various item types.**

   The item specifications in this document describe possible item approaches and may refer to a specific item type to illustrate an approach. Consider how a similar approach could be used with a different item type, or how the item approach could be adapted to work more naturally with a different item type.

2. **Consider the appropriateness of an item type.**

   To consider the appropriateness of an item type for a specific grade level and to assess a specific standard, ask these questions:

   o   How complex is the item type for the grade level? Will the item's functionality make the task too complex?
   o   Based on the item type, how easy will it be for students to understand what the item is asking them to do?
   o   How well or how authentically can the item type assess the targeted standard?
   o   Does the point value for the item type adequately reflect the difficulty of the task?
   o   Should students be able to earn partial credit for this standard?
   o   Can the item type increase student engagement without making the task overly complex?

3. **Consider the pros and cons of using a technology-enhanced item (TEI).**

   Use of TEIs should be both intentional and appropriate for the intended grade level and the standard being assessed. TEIs should never be used for technology's sake alone. For example, TEIs should not be used to increase student engagement if they also make the task overly complex (e.g., students must move many parts into many different containers). Such construct-irrelevant complexity is unfair and detracts from students being able to show what they know and can do. Therefore, the best way to ensure TEIs are used intentionally and appropriately is to consider the pros and cons of using a TEI for each item.

Item Specifications for Reading

Prose and Poetry Standards

LA.6.RP.1

Content Strand	Reading Prose and Poetry
Anchor Standard	Central Ideas and Details Citing relevant and thorough textual evidence to support ideas, evaluate the development of themes or central ideas in grade-level literary texts.
Standard	LA.6.RP.1 Determine the implied or explicit theme of a literary text and how it develops over the course of a text.
Indicator	N/A
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.RP.1 asks students to both: • Determine an **implied** or **explicit theme** of a literary text; and • Determine how that theme develops over the course of a text, which may include its **relationship to supporting ideas**. A **theme** is an insight about life or human nature that the author of a literary text wants to share with the reader. An **implied theme** is a theme that is not directly stated but can be inferred from the characters' actions, dialogue, and events in the story. An **explicit theme** is a theme that is clearly and directly stated by the author within the text. A theme's **relationship to supporting ideas** involves how specific events, character actions, or dialogue contribute to developing, illustrating, and reinforcing the theme throughout the text. Describing what a literary text is mostly about (e.g., honesty, respect) is not the same as stating its theme, which should be a statement that offers some insight into life or human nature (e.g., Being truthful is important, even when it's difficult.; Treating others with respect helps build strong relationships.).
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on explaining the theme in a literary text and how it is conveyed through key details. The Grade 6 standard progresses to determining an implied or explicit theme and how it develops over the course of a text, showing that students are expected to have a slightly more sophisticated understanding of how authors develop themes.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in Developing can likely: **Determine the implied or explicit theme of a literary text.** DOK: 2–3	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in On Track can likely: Determine the implied or explicit theme of a literary text **and how it develops over the course of a text.** DOK: 2–3	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found at the intersection of Grade 6 and Grade 7, a student performing in Advanced can likely: Determine the implied or explicit theme of a literary text and how it develops over the course of a text, **including the relationship to supporting ideas.** DOK: 3
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will determine the implied or explicit theme of a literary text. The theme should be explicitly stated in the text or implied but easy to understand. • Stems can ask what the theme of a literary text is. The correct answer should be a complete sentence and could be a direct quotation from the text if the theme is explicitly stated. Distractors should refer to other ideas in the text or use non-theme sentences from the text and should represent an incorrect theme or common misconception about the intended theme.	Students will determine the implied or explicit theme of a literary text (Part A) and how it develops over the course of a text (Part B). The implied or explicit theme should be accessible for students in Grade 6. • Part A can be similar to the item approach for Developing. • Stems for Part B should focus on how the correct theme from Part A develops over the course of the text. Students can be asked to select the piece(s) of textual evidence (e.g., direct quotation, paraphrased description of an event) that best develop the theme. Or they can be asked how a particular paragraph contributes to or reinforces the theme, such as, "It shows that despite the many changes in her life, Anya still finds a way to be happy." The correct answer should be the quotation, event, or description that best shows how the theme is developed. The distractors should be other quotations, events, or descriptions that are somewhat related to the distractors in Part A.	Students will determine the implied or explicit theme in a literary text (Part A) and how it develops over the course of a text, including the relationship to supporting ideas (Part B). The implied or explicit theme should be somewhat challenging to understand. • Part A and Part B can be similar to the item approach for On Track, but the correct answer for Part B should focus on the relationship between the theme and supporting ideas in the text. For example, "How does Anya help develop the correct theme from Part A?" with a correct answer being something like, "by sharing her thoughts about making a difficult decision."

LA.6.RP.2

Content Strand	Reading Prose and Poetry
Anchor Standard	Central Ideas and Details Citing relevant and thorough textual evidence to support ideas, evaluate the development of themes or central ideas in grade-level literary texts.
Standard	LA.6.RP.2 Explain how a plot unfolds as well as how the characters respond to events or changes as the plot moves toward a resolution.
Indicator	N/A
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.RP.2 asks students to both: • Identify a text's **key details** and **major characters** that help develop the **plot**; and • Explain how a **plot unfolds** as well as how the characters **respond to events or change**s as the plot moves toward a **resolution**. The **key details** of a literary text are the important events, actions, and pieces of information that contribute to the development of the story. The **major characters** are the key individuals who are involved in the action of the story. The **plot** is the sequence of events in the story, which shows how the character(s) face and solve problems. The typical sequence in which a **plot unfolds** is through an introduction that reveals the conflict followed by rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution. The characters in a story **respond to events or changes** based on their own or other characters' actions, decisions, emotions, etc. The **resolution** is the conclusion to the story, where conflicts are resolved, and the story comes to a satisfying end. The intent of this standard is for students to think deeply about connections between the plot (i.e., how it unfolds) and the character(s) (i.e., how they respond or change). This might involve considering why one event causes or follows another and how those events change the character or how the character's response causes a later event. This standard is not about putting events into sequence.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on comparing and contrasting two or more characters, settings, or events, in a literary text or texts. The Grade 6 standard progresses to explaining how a plot unfolds as well as how the characters respond to events or changes as the plot moves toward a resolution. This broader focus, and the inclusion of terms like resolution, suggests that students are expected to have a more sophisticated understanding of plot and how authors develop it.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in Developing can likely: **Identify a text's key details and major characters that help develop the plot.** DOK: 2	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in On Track can likely: **Explain how a plot unfolds as well as how the characters respond to events or changes as the plot moves toward a resolution.** DOK: 2–3	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found at the intersection of Grade 6 and Grade 7, a student performing in Advanced can likely: **Analyze** how a plot unfolds as well as how the characters **develop and change** as the plot moves toward a resolution. DOK: 3
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will identify a text's key details and major characters that help develop the plot. • Stems can include a specific detail about a major character and ask students to identify how that detail develops the plot. While the correct answer should refer to an element of plot, it can use more student-friendly language (e.g., It shows that the story begins/ends with X, that the main problem is Y, or that the turning point in the story is Z). The distractors should be about other, or less important, parts of the plot, or they can be plausible misconceptions about the correct element of plot. • Alternatively, the stem can ask students to identify a key detail that helps explain why a major character is important to the story or to a specific part of the plot.	Students will explain how a plot unfolds and/or how the characters respond to events or changes as the plot moves toward a resolution. • Stems can ask students to explain how two or more events relate to the plot and how characters respond to those events or changes. While a multiple-choice item can work for this approach, the options may become cumbersome due to length. Technology-enhanced items present a viable format for explaining these types of cause-effect relationships, with students having to select events or character's responses from a toolbox and move them into a table that shows how one event (e.g., the climax or turning point in the story) causes a character's response, which then leads to another event (e.g., the resolution or conclusion to the story). • Alternatively, the On Track ALD could be assessed with a two-part item that asks students how a character responds to a specific event (Part A) and then asks students what happens because of the character's response (Part B).	Students will analyze how a plot unfolds as well as how the characters develop and change as the plot moves toward a resolution. • Stems can be similar to the item approach for On Track, but the correct answers should require students to analyze the plot as well as how the characters develop and change. • Alternatively, the Advanced ALD could be assessed with a two-part item that asks students to analyze the relationship between two events in the story (Part A) and then asks students to analyze how the character(s) develop or change as a result of the two events (Part B). The correct answer(s) to Part B could be the description(s) of a character or piece(s) of textual evidence that shows the before and after (or just the after) of how the character has developed and changed.

LA.6.RP.3

Content Strand	Reading Prose and Poetry
Anchor Standard	Author's Craft Citing relevant and thorough evidence to support ideas, evaluate the development and interaction of individuals, ideas, and events in grade-level literary text.
Standard	LA.6.RP.3 Explain how an author establishes and conveys the point(s) of view of a narrator or speaker in a literary text.
Indicator	N/A
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.RP.3 asks students to both: • Explain a **narrator's** or **speaker's point of view** in a literary text; and • Explain how an author **establishes and conveys the point(s) of view** of a narrator or speaker in a literary text, which may include analyzing the techniques an author uses. The **narrator** is the person or character who tells the story. The narrator can be a character within the story or an outside observer. The **speaker** is the person or character who is talking in the poem. The speaker can be the poet, a character within the poem, or an outside observer. The **point of view** refers to the vantage point from which a narrative, such as a story or poem, is told (e.g., first person, second person, third person, third-person limited, third-person omniscient). Authors make choices about how to **establish and convey the point(s) of view** of a narrator or speaker in a literary text, such as through the use of descriptive language, the thoughts and feelings of the narrator or speaker, dialogue, and the narrator's or speaker's interactions with other characters. This standard is meant to encourage thinking about how a narrator's or speaker's point(s) of view affects and influences the meaning of a literary text. It is not about labeling the point of view as first-person, third-person, etc.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on describing how a narrator or speaker's point of view (the vantage point from which a story or poem is told), influences the meaning of a literary text. The Grade 6 standard progresses to explaining how an author establishes and conveys the point(s) of view of a narrator or speaker, which requires a more nuanced understanding of the author's choices regarding point of view.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in Developing can likely: **Explain a narrator's or speaker's point of view in a literary text.** DOK: 2	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in On Track can likely: **Explain how an author establishes and conveys the point(s) of view of a narrator or speaker in a literary text.** DOK: 2–3	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found at the intersection of Grade 6 and Grade 7, a student performing in Advanced can likely: **Analyze the techniques an author uses to** establish and convey the point(s) of view of a narrator or speaker in a literary text. DOK: 3
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will explain a narrator's or speaker's point of view in a literary text. The point of view should be explicitly stated in the text or implied but easy to understand. • Stems can ask students to explain the narrator or speaker's point of view (i.e., how the story is told). The options should not use terms like first-person or third-person but should describe these points of view in a text-specific manner. For example, a correct answer for a poem told in the third person might be: "The speaker describes how two neighbors view the fence between them differently." A plausible distractor for the same poem should be something that suggests the poem is told in the first person, such as, "The speaker explains why his beliefs about the fence are better than his neighbor's."	Students will explain how an author establishes and/or conveys the point(s) of view of a narrator or speaker in a literary text. The point of view should be accessible for students in Grade 6. • Stems can ask students to explain how the author shows the narrator/speaker's point(s) of view in a literary text. The influences can be explicit (e.g., "One neighbor never walks the fence line, preferring to stay indoors.") or implicit but easy to access for Grade 6 students (e.g., "The other neighbor walks along the fence daily, humming a tune that calls other neighbors and birds.") Distractors would be plausible details about the topic of the text but ones that do not show the speaker's point(s) of view (e.g., "This fence between two neighbors was built long ago, with wood, and nails, and honest hands.").	Students will analyze the techniques an author uses to establish and/or convey the point(s) of view of a narrator or speaker in a literary text. The point of view should be implied in the text and somewhat challenging to understand. • Stems can be similar to the item approach for On Track, but the correct answers should require students to analyze rather than identify the techniques an author uses to establish and/or convey the point(s) of view. For example, "How does the author reveal the speaker's point of view?" with a correct answer being, "The speaker compares and contrasts each neighbor's actions and thoughts about the fence." Distractors would be plausible but incorrect ways the speaker's point of view is developed, such as, "The speaker explains why he thinks his neighbor is selfish and rude." The item could also include a Part B that asks students for textual evidence to support the correct answer to Part A.

LA.6.RP.4

Content Strand	Reading Prose and Poetry
Anchor Standard	Author's Craft Citing relevant and thorough evidence to support ideas, evaluate the development and interaction of individuals, ideas, and events in grade-level literary text.
Standard	LA.6.RP.4 Analyze how a sequence of chapters, scenes, or stanzas contribute to the development of literary elements (e.g., theme, setting, or plot).
Indicator	N/A
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.RP.4 asks students to: • Analyze how a sequence of **chapters**, **scenes**, or **stanzas** contribute to the development of **literary elements** (e.g., theme, setting, or plot). **Chapters, scenes,** and **stanzas** refer to the structural parts of a literary text that contribute to its form and meaning. These parts fit together to provide the overall structure of a literary text, which is often determined by its genre. For example, the structure of a narrative text typically includes a conflict, events, and a resolution. The structure of a poem may include stanzas and rhyme schemes, which help tell a story or provide a description of a topic. The structure of a drama may include acts, scenes, and stage directions, which help the reader visualize the performance. **Literary elements**, such as theme, setting, or plot, are the fundamental components that make up a literary text. The theme is the central idea or message about life or human nature that the author wants to share with the reader, the setting is the time and place where the story occurs, and the plot is the sequence of events that make up the story. The intent of this standard is for students to think more deeply about how and why a particular sequence of parts was chosen and how those parts contribute to the development of literary elements.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on explaining how a sequence of chapters, scenes, or stanzas fit together to provide and support the overall structure of literary texts. The Grade 6 standard shifts from explaining to analyzing how these structural pieces contribute to the text, focusing on the development of literary elements (e.g., theme, setting, or plot) rather than the overall structure. This shows that students are expected to have a slightly more sophisticated understanding of how authors use structure to develop literary texts.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in Developing can likely: **Explain** how individual chapters, scenes, or stanzas contribute to the development of literary elements (e.g., theme, setting, or plot). DOK: 2	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in On Track can likely: **Analyze** how a sequence of chapters, scenes, or stanzas contribute to the development of literary elements (e.g., theme, setting, or plot). DOK: 2–3	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found at the intersection of Grade 6 and Grade 7, a student performing in Advanced can likely: **Evaluate** how effective a sequence of chapters, scenes, or stanzas is at contributing to the development of literary elements (e.g., theme, setting, or plot). DOK: 3
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will explain how individual chapters, scenes, or stanzas contribute to the development of literary elements (e.g., theme, setting, or plot). • Stems can ask students to explain how a specific part of a text (e.g., scene, stanza, section) contributes to the theme, setting, or plot. For example, "How does paragraph 3 introduce the theme of the story?" or "How does the scene in paragraphs 5–8 help develop the plot?" or "What does the first stanza of the poem suggest about the setting?" Correct answers should clearly state how the specific part contributes to developing the literary element given in the stem (e.g., theme, setting, or plot). For example, correct answers for the questions asked above might be: "It reveals what happened in the past when Katya was dishonest." or "It shows that the conflict of the story is whether Katya will decide to tell the truth now." or "It suggests that the setting is an imaginary place." Distractors would be plausible but incorrect descriptions of the same literary element (e.g., theme, setting, or plot) not different literary elements.	Students will analyze how a sequence of chapters, scenes, or stanzas contribute to the development of literary elements (e.g., theme, setting, or plot). • Stems can be similar to the item approach for Developing, but students should be asked to analyze rather than explain how a specific part of a text (e.g., scene, stanza, section) contributes to the theme, setting, or plot. This means the literary element does not need to be given in the stem. For example, "How do paragraphs 14–16 develop an idea that is first introduced in paragraphs 1–3?" or "What is the main purpose of stanza 4 in the poem?" or "How does paragraph 9 help prepare the reader for the rest of the play?" • Another way to assess the analyze part of the ALD is to add a Part B that asks for textual evidence to support the correct answer to Part A, either in the form of direct quotations or paraphrased details.	Students will evaluate how effective a sequence of chapters, scenes, or stanzas is at contributing to the development of literary elements (e.g., theme, setting, or plot). • Stems can ask students why a specific part of a text (e.g., scene, stanza, section) was effective in developing the theme, setting, or plot. For example, "Why are paragraphs 23–26 an effective ending to the story?" or "Why is the description of the setting in stanzas 2 and 3 useful for developing the plot?" or "Why is the author's choice to state the theme at the beginning a strong way to introduce the story?" The correct answer would provide a reason the identified part of the text was effective, for example, "The details show how vivid the speaker's imagination is." The distractors would be plausible but incorrect explanations, such as, "The words suggest that the speaker has mixed feelings about the place." •Stems for Part B, if included, should ask for textual evidence to support the correct answer to Part A, either in the form of direct quotations or paraphrased details.

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LA.6.RP.5

Content Strand	Reading Prose and Poetry
Anchor Standard	Knowledge and Ideas Citing relevant and thorough textual evidence to support ideas, evaluate how an author's perspective or use of point of view shapes the style and meaning of grade-level literary text.
Standard	LA.6.RP.5 Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems, historical novels, fantasy stories) and their treatment of similar themes and topics.
Indicator	N/A
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.RP.5 asks students to both: • Identify and/or describe the **themes and topics** found in different forms or genres; and • Compare and contrast texts in different **forms** or **genres** and their treatment of similar themes and topics, which may include analyzing how this treatment contributes to the meaning of the texts. A **theme** is a message about life or human nature that the author wants to share with the reader. A **topic** is a subject that is discussed or explored in a text. Two texts with a shared theme/topic of friendship may treat the theme/topic differently. For example, one text might emphasize that true friends support each other through good times and bad, while the other shows that true friends are honest with each other even if the truth is difficult to share. The **form** of a literary work refers to its structure or shape (e.g., prose, drama, poetry), while the **genre** categorizes its content, style, or purpose (e.g., mystery, historical fiction, fantasy, science fiction, comedy, tragedy, epic poem, lyric poem). Comparing and contrasting texts in different forms (e.g., stories and poems) or genres (e.g., historical novels and fantasy stories) means considering how the form and/or genre affects the treatment of the theme and topic. Literary texts for this standard should be paired and conceptually related by theme and topic. In addition, the texts must be in different forms (e.g., stories and poems) or genres (e.g., historical novels and fantasy stories). To compare and/or contrast sufficiently, students are being asked to consider how an area of similarity or difference is treated in each text.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on comparing and contrasting the treatment of themes and topics in literary texts of the same genre. The Grade 6 standard progresses to comparing and contrasting the treatment of similar themes and topics in texts from different forms (e.g., stories and poems) or genres (e.g., historical novels and fantasy stories). This shows that students are expected to have a greater understanding of literary genres.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in Developing can likely: **Identify** and/or describe the themes and topics found in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems, historical novels, fantasy stories). DOK: 2–3	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in On Track can likely: **Compare and contrast** texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems, historical novels, fantasy stories) and their treatment of similar themes and topics. DOK: 2–3	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found at the intersection of Grade 6 and Grade 7, a student performing in Advanced can likely: **Analyze** how the treatment of themes and topics in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems, historical novels, fantasy stories) contributes to the meaning of the texts. DOK: 3
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will identify or describe the themes and topics found in different forms (e.g., stories and poems) or genres (e.g., historical novels and fantasy stories). The themes should be explicitly stated in the texts or implied but easy to understand. • Stems can ask students to identify or describe the themes and topics found in two literary texts, with the options being complete sentences (e.g., Being kind to others creates a positive and supportive community). Stems can also ask students to identify or describe topics (e.g., The story focuses on different acts of kindness within a community.) • Students developing the skills needed for this standard will not yet be able to compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes and topics across texts, but they should be able to identify the themes and topics in each text.	Students will compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes and topics in literary texts from different forms (e.g., stories and poems) or genres (e.g., historical novels and fantasy stories). The themes should be accessible for students in Grade 6. • Stems can ask students how the author of each text treats a similar theme (e.g., Being kind to others creates a positive and supportive community) or topic (e.g., kindness, community). Themes should not be phrases that describe only the topic (e.g., being kind to others) but rather complete ideas that include the author's message about the topic (e.g., Text 1 shows how kindness helps people feel like they belong, while Text 2 shows how acts of kindness can be contagious.).	Students will analyze how the treatment of themes and topics in literary texts from different forms (e.g., stories and poems) or genres (e.g., historical novels and fantasy stories) contributes to the meaning of the texts. The themes should be implied in the texts and somewhat challenging to understand. • Stems can ask students to analyze each author's treatment of theme (e.g., the author of Text 1 uses characters' thoughts and feelings to show a sense of belonging, while the author of Text 2 uses characters' words and actions to show how one kind act leads to another) or topic (e.g., Text 1 shows how people can be kind to a new member of a community, and Text 2 shows how one person's kindness encourages others to be kind too). Part B, if included, can ask students how this treatment contributes to the meaning of the texts, either by selecting a sentence/detail from each text that best supports the correct answer to Part A, or by explaining the meaning that is added to each text (e.g., how the sense of belonging in Text 1 emphasizes the importance of community, or how the chain reaction of kindness in Text 2 highlights the effect of positive actions).

LA.6.RP.6

Content Strand	Reading Prose and Poetry
Anchor Standard	Knowledge and Ideas Citing relevant and thorough textual evidence to support ideas, evaluate how an author's perspective or use of point of view shapes the style and meaning of grade-level literary text.
Standard	LA.6.RP.6 Analyze a literary text to answer and develop inferential and evaluative questions to enhance the comprehension of self and others, quoting or paraphrasing specific evidence from the text.
Indicator	N/A
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.RP.6 asks students to both: • Explain what the text says **explicitly** and draw **inferences** from the text; and • **Analyze** a literary text to answer or develop inferential and evaluative questions to enhance the comprehension of self and others, quoting or paraphrasing specific evidence from the text. What the text says **explicitly** means any information that is clearly and directly stated in the text. To draw **inferences** means to make logical conclusions or interpretations based on evidence and reasoning from the text, rather than relying on what the text says explicitly. The **analyze** piece of the standard means that students are being asked to break down specific parts of the text to answer inferential and evaluative questions.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on analyzing a literary text to answer and develop inferential questions to enhance the comprehension of self and others, quoting or paraphrasing specific evidence from the text. The Grade 6 standard is nearly the same but adds evaluative questions, suggesting that students are expected to apply their own reasoning to the analysis of literary texts.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**

With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in Developing can likely: **Explain** what the text says explicitly and draw inferences when asking or answering questions, quoting or paraphrasing specific evidence from the text as appropriate. DOK: 2	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in On Track can likely: **Analyze** a literary text to answer and develop inferential and evaluative questions to enhance the comprehension of self and others, quoting or paraphrasing specific evidence from the text. DOK: 2–3	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found at the intersection of Grade 6 and Grade 7, a student performing in Advanced can likely: **Evaluate** a literary text to answer and develop complex inferential and evaluative questions to enhance the comprehension of self and others, quoting or paraphrasing specific evidence from the text. DOK: 3
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will explain what the literary text says explicitly and/or draw inferences when asking or answering questions, quoting or paraphrasing specific evidence from the text. • Stems can ask students about an important idea or key particular of a text, with the correct answer being a direct quotation or paraphrased evidence from the text. • Alternatively, Part A stems might ask students about an important idea or key particular of a text that requires drawing an inference. Part B stems would ask for textual evidence to support the correct answer to Part A, either in the form of direct quotations or paraphrased details. • With either approach, any questions should have the basis for their answers within the four corners of the text, not requiring outside knowledge. For example, students can make inferences about a character's emotions based on the events of a story but not based on outside knowledge of the rules of baseball or the process of baking a cake.	Students will analyze a literary text to answer and/or develop inferential or evaluative questions to enhance the comprehension of self and others, quoting or paraphrasing specific evidence from the text. • Items should focus on "others" only, e.g., story characters, the reader; reflection of "self" is appropriate for classroom activities. • Stems can ask students to answer questions based on inferences that can be made from the text. For example, "What can the reader tell about the setting based on the text?" The answer could be, "The reasons the old ship sank and then washed ashore are a mystery." Distractors would be incorrect inferences based on the text. •Another approach may be to ask students which question could be answered based on the text. Four inferential questions would be provided as options, but only one of them could be answered using information from the text (e.g., Why was Mateo so curious about the setting?). • Part B would ask students to cite or paraphrase the textual evidence that best supports the correct answer to Part A.	Students will evaluate a literary text to answer and/or develop complex inferential or evaluative questions to enhance the comprehension of self and others, quoting or paraphrasing specific evidence from the text. • Stems for Part A and Part B can be similar to the item approach for On Track, with the key difference being that Advanced items should require greater evaluation of elements in the text.

LA.6.RP.7

Content Strand	Reading Prose and Poetry
Anchor Standard	Knowledge and Ideas Citing relevant and thorough textual evidence to support ideas, evaluate how an author's perspective or use of point of view shapes the style and meaning of grade-level literary text.
Standard	LA.6.RP.7 Compare and contrast regional, national, and/or multicultural perspectives within and across literary texts.
Indicator	N/A
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.RP.7 asks students to both: • Describe regional, national, and/or multicultural **perspectives** within or across literary texts; and • Compare and contrast regional, national, and/or multicultural perspectives within or across literary texts. A **perspective** is an attitude or belief that is based on personal knowledge and/or experience. A **regional perspective** reflects the customs, traditions, and viewpoints specific to a particular geographic area or community within a country. For example, a story set in the Southern United States might reflect the region's unique dialect, cuisine, and traditions, such as the importance of Southern hospitality. A **national perspective** reflects the customs, traditions, and viewpoints shared by the majority of people within a country. For example, a story about the American Dream might focus on themes related to hard work, success, and the pursuit of happiness. A **multicultural perspective** reflects the customs, traditions, and viewpoints of many people within a cultural group or across cultural groups. For example, a story that explores the experiences of immigrants from different backgrounds might highlight the challenges and opportunities of adapting to a new culture while preserving one's heritage. To compare and/or contrast sufficiently, students are being asked to consider how an area of similarity or difference is treated within or across texts.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on explaining the relationships between two or more characters, events, or ideas in a range of literary texts. The Grade 6 standard progresses to comparing and contrasting regional, national, and/or multicultural perspectives within and across literary texts. This requires students to synthesize broader knowledge of the world with what they read in a text, reflecting a growing knowledge base as well as a more sophisticated understanding of the text.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in Developing can likely: **Describe** regional, national, and/or multicultural perspectives within and/or across literary texts. DOK: 2–3	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in On Track can likely: **Compare and contrast** regional, national, and/or multicultural perspectives within and across literary texts. DOK: 2–3	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found at the intersection of Grade 6 and Grade 7, a student performing in Advanced can likely: **Explain** how authors develop regional, national, and/or multicultural perspectives within and across literary texts. DOK: 2–3
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will describe regional, national, and/or multicultural perspectives within or across literary texts. Answer options should avoid stereotypes and negative portrayals of any given culture. • Stems can include a specific detail from the text and ask what that detail shows about the perspective of a character or group of characters. The correct answer should be central to the story and well supported by the text, such as "the importance of treating guests well," which could describe Southern hospitality, or "the desire to succeed through hard work," which could describe the American Dream, or "the challenges and	Students will compare and/or contrast regional, national, and/or multicultural perspectives within or across literary texts. Answer options should avoid stereotypes and negative portrayals of any given culture. • Part A stems can ask students to compare and/or contrast perspectives within or across texts. To do so within a single text, the text must have two or more well-developed perspectives. For example, the question might ask about a similarity between two characters from different cultures, "How do Nia and Malik feel about spending time with a grandparent?" And the answer would be, "They both enjoy spending	Students will explain how authors develop regional, national, and/or multicultural perspectives within and across literary texts. Answer options should avoid stereotypes and negative portrayals of any given culture. • Stems can ask students to explain how an author develops a regional, national, or multicultural perspective within or across literary texts. For example, the question might ask, "How does the author show that Zara's family shares the common Arabic belief that treating guests well is important?" The correct answer would be, "by describing all the hard work and care that goes into

opportunities of adapting to a new home," which could describe the immigrant experience. The distractors should be the character's attitudes or beliefs toward other topics in the text or plausible misconceptions of the correct perspective.

- Alternatively, stems might ask what a specific paragraph or section in the text reveals about what a character or group of characters thinks or believes about a topic and why. Part B, if included, would ask students to select the piece of textual evidence that best supports the correct answer to Part A, with all options being direct quotations or paraphrased details from the text.

time with their grandparents" Or it might ask about a difference between two characters from the same region/country/culture. "How are Sofia and Amara's efforts to win the science fair different?" The answer might be, "Sofia wants to be seen as the best scientist at her school, while Amara wants to invent something that helps people." Part B can ask students what this similarity or difference shows about the characters' cultures, for example, "Both cultures value the wisdom that older people can provide."

- Another valid approach is to use a Multi-select item that provides a common similarity or difference between cultures and asks students to select evidence of how that similarity or difference is seen in different characters. For example, stems can ask how a belief that hard work is rewarding is shown by two different characters in the text(s).

preparing a special meal." An alternate stem might ask, "How does the author show Hudson's belief in the idea that hard work is rewarding?" The correct answer would be, "by having him explain why he works to start a dog walking business in his neighborhood."

- Stems for Part B, if included, would ask students to select the piece(s) of textual evidence that best supports the correct answer to Part A, with all options being direct quotations or paraphrased details from the text.

Item Specifications for Reading

Informational Text Standards

LA.6.RI.1

Content Strand	Reading Informational Text
Anchor Standard	Central Ideas and Details Citing relevant and thorough textual evidence to support ideas, evaluate the development of themes or central ideas in grade-level informational texts.
Standard	LA.6.RI.1 Determine the implied or explicit central idea of an informational text and how it develops over the course of a text.
Indicator	N/A
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.RI.1 asks students to both: • Determine the **implied or explicit central idea** in an informational text; and • Determine how that idea develops over the course of the text, which may include its **relationship to supporting ideas**. A **central idea** is the main point or primary message the author wants to convey in the text. An **implied central idea** is not directly stated in the text but can be inferred from the details, examples, and overall context provided by the author. An **explicit central idea** is clearly and directly stated by the author within the text. A central idea's **relationship to supporting ideas** involves how specific details, examples, etc. contribute to the development and reinforcement of the central idea throughout the text.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on explaining the central idea in an informational text and how it is conveyed through key details. The Grade 6 standard progresses to determining how an implied or explicit central idea develops over the course of an informational text, suggesting that students have a greater understanding of how authors develop both implied and explicit central ideas.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	On Track	Advanced

With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in Developing can likely: **Determine the implied or explicit central idea of an informational text.** DOK: 2	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in On Track can likely: Determine the implied or explicit central idea of an informational text **and how it develops over the course of a text.** DOK: 2–3	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found at the intersection of Grade 6 and Grade 7, a student performing in Advanced can likely: Determine the implied or explicit central idea of an informational text and how it develops over the course of a text, **including the relationship to supporting ideas.** DOK: 3
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will determine the implied or explicit central idea of an informational text. The central idea should be explicitly stated in the text or implied but easy to understand. • Stems can ask what the central idea is in an informational text. The correct answer should be a complete sentence and could be a direct quotation from the text or a paraphrase. Distractors should be other ideas in the text that are not a central idea but rather just a detail or should express likely misinterpretations of the central idea.	Students will determine the implied or explicit central idea of an informational text (Part A) and how it develops over the course of a text (Part B). The implied or explicit central idea should be accessible for students in Grade 6. • Part A can be similar to the item approach for Developing. • Stems for Part B should focus on how the correct central idea from Part A develops over the course of the text. For example, if the topic of the informational text is high-speed trains, students can be asked to select the piece(s) of textual evidence (e.g., direct quotations, paraphrased details) that best develops the correct central idea from Part A, which is that "high-speed trains are an efficient and cost-effective way to travel." Students can also be asked how a particular paragraph/section develops this central idea, with the correct answer being, "It explains the benefits of reduced travel time and increased connectivity." Another valid approach is to ask students to determine which statement best explains how the author develops the central idea, with the correct answer being the technique(s) used, such as, "The author uses statistics and expert opinions to highlight the advantages of high-speed trains." Whichever approach is taken, the correct answer should be the quotation, detail, or description that best shows how the author develops the central idea, while the distractors should be plausible quotations, details, or descriptions that are somewhat related to the distractors in Part A.	Students will determine the implied or explicit central idea of an informational text (Part A) and how it develops over the course of a text, including the relationship to supporting ideas (Part B). The implied or explicit central idea in the text should be somewhat challenging to understand. • Part A and Part B can be similar to the item approach for On Track, but the correct answers for Part B should focus on the relationship between the central idea and the supporting ideas in the text. For example, "How are the expert opinions in paragraphs 5 and 6 connected to the correct central idea from Part A?" with a correct answer being something like, "They highlight the many advantages of high-speed trains and the few limitations."

LA.6.RI.2

Content Strand	Reading Informational Text
Anchor Standard	Central Ideas and Details Citing relevant and thorough textual evidence to support ideas, evaluate the development of themes or central ideas in grade-level informational texts.
Standard	LA.6.RI.2 Explain how a key individual, event, or idea or concept is introduced and developed, drawing on specific supporting details in an informational text.
Indicator	N/A
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.RI.2 asks students to both: • Explain how a **key individual**, **event**, or **idea or concep**t is introduced and developed; and • **Draw on specific supporting details** in an informational text. A **key individual** is a person who plays a significant role in the text and whose actions, decisions, or experiences are central to the topic(s) being discussed. An **event** is a significant occurrence described in the text that has some impact on the topic(s) of the text. An **idea or concept** is a thought, theory, or principle that is central to the text and is explored or explained by the author. To **draw on specific supporting details** means to use textual evidence as support. This part of the standard may be addressed with direct quotations from the text or with paraphrased details. The intent of this standard is for students to think deeply about the important elements in an informational text (e.g., individuals, events, ideas/concepts) and the relationships between them, including how they are introduced and developed.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on comparing and contrasting two or more individuals, events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in a process, as well as drawing on supporting details as evidence. The Grade 6 standard narrows to explaining how a key individual, event, or idea or concept is introduced and developed, drawing on specific supporting details in an informational text. This suggests that students are expected to do a more in-depth analysis of one key element.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in Developing can likely: **Explain how a key individual, event, or idea or concept is introduced and developed.** DOK: 2	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in On Track can likely: Explain how a key individual, event, or idea or concept is introduced and developed, **drawing on specific supporting details in an informational text.** DOK: 2–3	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found at the intersection of Grade 6 and Grade 7, a student performing in Advanced can likely: **Analyze how the development of a key individual(s), event(s), or idea(s), or concept(s) creates meaning,** drawing on specific supporting details in an informational text. DOK: 3
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will explain how a key individual, event, or idea/concept is introduced or developed. • Stems can ask students how a specific individual, event, or idea/concept is introduced or developed. For example, "How is the concept of high-speed train travel introduced in the text?" with the correct answer being, "through a detailed description of what it is like to travel on a high-speed train." Or the stem could ask, "How is the idea of high-speed train travel developed in the text?" with the correct answer being, "by comparing and contrasting how high-speed trains are used in different parts of the world."	Students will explain how a key individual, event, or idea or concept is introduced and developed. • Stems for Part A can be similar to the item approach for Developing, but a Part B is needed to show how students draw on specific supporting details in an informational text. The Part B stem should ask for textual evidence to support the correct answer to Part A, with the answer choices being direct quotations or paraphrased details.	Students will analyze how the development of a key individual(s), event(s), or idea(s)/concept(s) creates meaning, drawing on specific supporting details in an informational text. • Stems for Part A and Part B can be similar to the item approach for On Track, but students should be asked to analyze rather than explain how key individuals, events, or ideas/concepts create meaning in a text. For example, "How does comparing and contrasting high-speed trains in different parts of the world add meaning to the text?" with the correct answer being, "It shows how far behind the United States is in building high-speed railways." Then Part B would ask for one or more pieces of textual evidence that support the correct answer to Part A, with the answer choices being direct quotations or paraphrased details.

LA.6.RI.3

Content Strand	Reading Informational Text
Anchor Standard	Author's Craft Citing relevant and thorough evidence to support ideas, evaluate the development and interaction of individuals, ideas, and events in grade-level informational texts.
Standard	LA.6.RI.3 Explain how an author establishes and conveys a perspective or purpose in an informational text.
Indicator	N/A
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.RI.3 asks students to both: • Determine an author's **perspective** or **purpose** in an informational text; and • Explain how an author **establishes and conveys a perspective or purpose** in an informational text, which may include analyzing the techniques an author uses. The **author's purpose** is why the author wrote the text, such as to inform, persuade, entertain, or explain about a specific topic. However, it is not enough to use broad terms like "to inform," "to persuade," "to entertain," or "to explain" to describe the author's purpose. Descriptions of an author's purpose should be specific to the text, including details about the topic the author is writing about (e.g., The author wants to inform the reader about the history of robots and how they have changed humans' lives.). The **author's perspective** is different from the author's purpose, as it includes the author's attitudes, beliefs, assumptions, and biases about the general subject or specific topics within an informational text. These attitudes, beliefs, etc. are based on the author's personal knowledge and/or experience (e.g., The author believes that robots have greatly improved humans' lives by taking over many boring and dangerous jobs.).
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on determining the author's purpose(s) and describing how the author's perspective (e.g., beliefs, assumptions, biases) influences the meaning of an informational text. The Grade 6 standard progresses to explaining how an author establishes and conveys a perspective or purpose, which shows that students are gaining a better understanding of the decisions authors make as they craft informational texts.
Achievement Level Descriptors	
Developing	On Track	Advanced

With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in Developing can likely: **Determine** and explain an author's perspective and/or purpose in an informational text. DOK: 2	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in On Track can likely: **Explain** how an author establishes and conveys a perspective or purpose in an informational text. DOK: 2–3	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found at the intersection of Grade 6 and Grade 7, a student performing in Advanced can likely: **Analyze** the techniques an author uses to establish and convey a perspective or purpose in an informational text. DOK: 3
	Possible Item Approaches	
Students will determine and explain an author's perspective or purpose in an informational text. The author's perspective or purpose should be explicitly stated in the text or implied but easy to understand. • Stems can ask students to determine whether the main purpose of the text is "to inform," "to persuade," "to entertain," "to explain," etc., but the options should be specific to the text (e.g., The author wants to inform the reader about the history of robots and how they have changed humans' lives.). • Alternatively, the stem may ask students to describe the author's perspective about the subject. For example, "Based on the text, how does the author view the relationship between robots and humans?" with the correct answer being, "The author believes that robots have greatly improved humans' lives by taking over many boring and dangerous jobs."	Students will explain how an author establishes or conveys a perspective or purpose in an informational text. The author's perspective or purpose should be accessible for students in Grade 6. • Stems can explicitly state the author's perspective or purpose and then ask students which technique the author uses to establish or convey this perspective or purpose in the text. Common techniques an author might use include: tone, text structure, word choice, facts, opinions, examples, anecdotes, text features, and/or descriptions. For example, the stem would ask, "How does the author develop the perspective that robots have improved humans' lives?" with the correct answer being "by giving examples from history of ways robots have protected people from danger." Or the stem could include a direct quotation from the text and then ask, "How does the author introduce this perspective in the text?" Here, the correct answer might be something like, "by describing how a robot protected human firefighters from a life-threatening situation." • A similar approach could be used to assess the author's purpose. Or a two-part item could ask, "What is the author's purpose for writing?" in Part A, and then, "How does the author develop this purpose in the text?" in Part B.	Students will analyze the techniques an author uses to establish or convey a perspective or purpose in an informational text. The author's perspective or purpose should be implied in the text and somewhat challenging to understand. •Stems can be similar to the item approaches for On Track, but they should ask students to analyze rather than explain the techniques an author uses to establish or convey a perspective or purpose in an information text. For example, "How does the structure of the text contribute to the author's purpose?" with the correct answer being, "by showing how robots have become more advanced over time, progressing from simple machines to helpful companions." Another way to assess analysis is to add a Part B that asks for textual evidence to support the correct answer from Part A, with the answer choices being direct quotations or paraphrased details.

LA.6.RI.4

Content Strand	Reading Informational Text
Anchor Standard	Author's Craft Citing relevant and thorough evidence to support ideas, evaluate the development and interaction of individuals, ideas, and events in grade-level informational texts.
Standard	LA.6.RI.4 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.
Indicator	N/A
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.RI.4 asks students to both: • Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the **overall structure** of a text; and • Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section **contributes to the development of the ideas**. The **overall structure** of an informational text refers to the primary way an author organizes information in a text. Common text structures used in informational texts include but are not limited to: description, sequence, chronology, cause-effect, compare-contrast, problem-solution, question-answer, classification, definition, or argument and evidence. How a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section, **contributes to the development of the ideas** means how that specific part of the text helps to clarify, illustrate, or expand upon the central idea(s) of the text. This may be done by providing examples, evidence, explanations, elaborations, etc.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on how text features contribute to the meaning of texts. The Grade 6 standard progresses to analyzing how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas, showing that students are expected to have a more sophisticated understanding of how structure contributes to meaning in informational texts.
Achievement Level Descriptors	

Developing	On Track	Advanced
With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in Developing can likely: **Explain** how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text. DOK: 2	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in On Track can likely: **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. DOK: 2–3	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found at the intersection of Grade 6 and Grade 7, a student performing in Advanced can likely: **Evaluate** how effectively a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas. DOK: 3
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will explain how a particular sentence, paragraph, or section fits into the overall structure of a text. • Stems can ask students to explain how a sentence, paragraph, or section fits into the overall structure of the text. This discrete chunk of text should be one that serves an important function in the text as a whole, clearly contributing to the development of ideas. In addition, the item should ask for more than an identification of the overall structure of the text. For example, "How does paragraph 2 fit into the overall structure of the text?" with the correct answer being, "It gives a detailed definition of a robot to show readers how robots are different from electronic devices." The distractors should include plausible but incorrect references to text structures other than the correct one (i.e., definition).	Students will analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas. • Stems for Part A can be similar to the item approach for Developing, but they should ask students to analyze rather than explain how a sentence, paragraph, or section fits into the overall structure of a text. In addition, to show how the discrete chunk of text contributes to the development of ideas, items should include a Part B that asks for textual evidence to support the correct answer in Part A, with the answer choices being direct quotations or paraphrased details. • Alternatively, stems can ask students how a particular sentence, paragraph, or section advances a particular idea in the text. For example, "How does paragraph 1 contribute to the author's ideas about advanced robots?" with the correct answer being, "It reminds readers that the history of advanced robots began in people's imaginations, as shown in books and movies." Again, the distractors should include plausible but incorrect references to text structures other than the correct one (i.e., chronology).	Students will evaluate how effectively a particular sentence, paragraph, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas. • Stems for Part A can ask students why a particular sentence, paragraph, or section was effective. For example, "Why is paragraph 10 an effective end to the author's history of robots?" with the correct answer being, "because it makes the reader feel excited and curious about what might come next." A plausible distractor might be, "because it returns to the idea from paragraph 1 that the history of robots began in people's imaginations." • Stems for Part B should ask for textual evidence to support the correct answer to Part A, either in the form of direct quotations or paraphrased details. For example, a correct answer with paraphrased details might be something like, "Paragraph 10 highlights recent breakthroughs and hints at the future potential of robots." A plausible distractor might be, "Paragraph 10 suggests that the robots of the future will be like those in science fiction books and movies."

LA.6.RI.5

Content Strand	Reading Informational Text
Anchor Standard	Knowledge and Ideas Citing relevant and thorough textual evidence to support ideas, evaluate how an author's perspective or use of point of view shapes the style and meaning of grade-level informational texts.
Standard	LA.6.RI.5 Compare and contrast one author's presentation of information with that of another.
Indicator	N/A
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.RI.5 asks students to both: • Understand how authors **present information**; and • Compare and contrast one author's presentation of information with that of another, which may include **evaluating the effectiveness** of the presentations. How an author **presents information** in an informational text refers to the techniques used to organize, explain, and convey the content to the reader. This can include the focus, text structures, language choices, tone, or text features (e.g., charts, graphs, images) used in a text. For example, if two authors are writing about the history of space exploration, one author might present the information by focusing on technological advancements, providing a detailed timeline of key missions and discoveries; the other author might present the information through personal stories and interviews with astronauts, highlighting their experiences and contributions. In addition, one author's choices might be more effective than the other's. Readers can **evaluate the effectiveness** of the presentations and provide supporting reasons. Texts for this standard must be paired and conceptually related by topic. To compare and/or contrast sufficiently, students are being asked to consider how an area of similarity or difference is treated in each text.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on integrating information from multiple texts on the same topic in order to demonstrate knowledge of the topic. The Grade 6 standard progresses to comparing and contrasting one author's presentation of information with that of another. This suggests that students have a better understanding of the choices authors make when writing informational texts.
Achievement Level Descriptors	

Developing	On Track	Advanced
With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in Developing can likely: **Explain** how one or more authors presents information. DOK: 2–3	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in On Track can likely: **Compare and contrast** one author's presentation of information with that of another. DOK: 2–3	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found at the intersection of Grade 6 and Grade 7, a student performing in Advanced can likely: **Evaluate** the effectiveness of two authors' presentation of information. DOK: 3
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will explain how one or two authors present information. • Stems can ask students to explain how one or both authors present information about a shared topic, such as space exploration. For example, "How does the author of Text 1 present information about space exploration?" with the correct answer being "through personal stories and interviews with astronauts and scientists." The distractors could be references to other, less important parts of the text, such as definitions of scientific terms or descriptions of various parts of a spaceship. • Students developing the skills needed for this standard will not yet be able to compare and contrast one author's presentation of information with that of another. However, they should be able to explain each author's presentation of information separately, or together, possibly with a technology-enhanced item that asks students to move the correct description of each author's presentation of information into a table.	Students will compare and/or contrast one author's presentation of information with that of another. • Stems can ask students to compare and/or contrast each author's presentation of information. For example, "How does each author present information about advancements in space exploration?" with the correct answer being, "Author A focuses on the improvements in engineering that have made trips to Mars possible, while Author B focuses on the human challenges and triumphs that astronauts face." • Alternatively, a technology-enhanced item could ask students to move descriptions of similarities (e.g., highlights improvements in spacecraft design, emphasizes advancements in technology from satellites to space stations) and differences (e.g., shares firsthand accounts from astronauts, includes interviews with engineers) between the authors' presentation of information into a table that is organized like a Venn diagram.	Students will evaluate the effectiveness of two authors' presentation of information. • Stems can ask students why one author's presentation of information was more effective than another's. For example, "Why are the interviews with astronauts more effective in Text 1 than in Text 2 at showing the grand achievement of space travel?" with the correct answer being, "because they reveal the wonder and awe of being in outer space." A plausible distractor might be, "because they focus on how daily life in space is similar to daily life on Earth." (This distractor is based on both texts including this type of information and/or it being a weak example of a "grand achievement.") • Stems for Part B, if included, should ask for textual evidence to support the correct answer to Part A, either in the form of direct quotations or paraphrased details. For example, a correct answer with paraphrased details might be something like, "the descriptions of weightlessness and seeing Earth from space." Meanwhile, a plausible distractor might be, "the explanations of how astronauts brush their teeth and eat breakfast."

LA.6.RI.6

Content Strand	Reading Informational Text
Anchor Standard	Knowledge and Ideas Citing relevant and thorough textual evidence to support ideas, evaluate how an author's perspective or use of point of view shapes the style and meaning of grade-level informational texts.
Standard	LA.6.RI.6 Analyze the development of an argument and identify the type(s) of reasoning used to support the argument.
Indicator	N/A
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.RI.6 asks students to both: • Analyze the development of an **argument**; and • Identify the **type(s) of reasoning** used to support the argument, which may include **evaluating the effectiveness** of the type(s) of reasoning used. An **argument** refers to an author's primary claim, which is developed through reasons and evidence. Authors of informational texts use different **types of reasoning** to support an argument, such as logical reasoning, ethical reasoning, emotional appeals, anecdotal evidence, statistical evidence, comparisons or contrasts, etc. **Evaluating the effectiveness** of the type(s) of reasoning used means assessing how well the reasoning supports the argument, considering factors such as clarity, relevance, and persuasiveness.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on analyzing the development of an author's claim(s) and how supporting evidence is used to support the claim(s). The Grade 6 standard progresses to analyzing the development of an argument and identifying the type(s) of reasoning used to support the argument, showing that students are beginning to understand that there are common types of reasoning and evidence authors use to develop and support their arguments in informational texts.

Achievement Level Descriptors (Next Page)		
Developing	On Track	Advanced

With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in Developing can likely: **Identify** and/or analyze the development of an argument. DOK: 2	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in On Track can likely: **Analyze** the development of an argument and identify the type(s) of reasoning used to support the argument. DOK: 2–3	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found at the intersection of Grade 6 and Grade 7, a student performing in Advanced can likely: Analyze the development of an argument **and evaluate** the effectiveness of the type(s) of reasoning used to support the argument. DOK: 3
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will identify and/or analyze the development of an argument. The argument should be explicitly stated in the text or implied but easy to understand. • Stems can ask students to identify and/or analyze the development of an argument (e.g., What argument is the author making in paragraphs 1–3?). The argument might be explicitly stated, requiring students to identify the sentence from the text. Or the argument might be implied but easy to understand, requiring students to analyze multiple paragraphs, or the entire text, and paraphrase the argument. For example, a correct answer might be: "Exploring space might be costly, but it inspires future generations to dream big and work together to solve important problems." • Another approach for analyzing the development of an argument is to ask students to identify which sentence best supports a given argument.	Students will analyze the development of an argument and identify the type(s) of reasoning used to support the argument. The argument should be accessible for students in Grade 6. • Stems can ask students to analyze the development of an argument, as described in the Developing ALD. However, items for On Track need to have a Part B that asks students to identify the type(s) of reasoning used to support the argument. For example, "How does the author support the argument?" with a correct answer being, "using language that tries to inspire readers by appealing to their emotions." • Alternatively, Part A can ask students to identify the type(s) of reasoning used to support the author's argument, and Part B can ask for the textual evidence that best supports the correct answer to Part A. In this case, the Part A stem could include a direct quotation of an explicitly stated argument and then ask, "How does the author develop this argument in the text?" Or the question can include a paraphrase of the argument, such as, "How does the author develop the argument that the high cost of space exploration is worth it?" Here, the correct answer to Part A might be, "using language that appeals to readers' emotions," and the correct answer(s) to Part B would be clear examples of such emotional appeals (e.g., "no limits to what we can achieve," "reach for the stars").	Students will analyze the development of an argument and evaluate the effectiveness of the type(s) of reasoning used to support the argument. The argument should be implied in the text and somewhat challenging to understand. • Stems for Part A can be similar to the second item approach for On Track, which asks students to identify the type(s) of reasoning used to support the author's argument. However, Part B should ask why this type of reasoning is effective/a string approach, with a correct answer being something like, "because it inspires readers to strive for greatness regardless of the expense."

LA.6.RI.7

Content Strand	Reading Informational Text
Anchor Standard	Knowledge and Ideas Citing relevant and thorough textual evidence to support ideas, evaluate how an author's perspective or use of point of view shapes the style and meaning of grade-level informational texts.
Standard	LA.6.RI.7 Compare and contrast regional, national, and/or multicultural perspectives within and across informational texts.
Indicator	N/A
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.RI.7 asks students to both: • Describe **regional**, **national**, and/or **multicultural perspectives** within or across informational texts; and • Compare and contrast regional, national, and/or multicultural perspectives within or across informational texts. A **perspective** is an attitude or belief that is based on personal knowledge and/or experience. A **regional perspective** reflects the customs, traditions, and viewpoints specific to a particular geographic area or community within a country. For example, a text about the Midwestern United States might highlight the importance of agriculture and community events like county fairs. A **national perspective** reflects the customs, traditions, and viewpoints shared by the majority of people within a country. For example, a text about the United States might emphasize the value of individual freedom. A **multicultural perspective** reflects the customs, traditions, and viewpoints of many people within or across cultural groups. For example, a text about Canada might discuss traditions from various cultures and the importance of bilingualism (English and French). To compare and/or contrast sufficiently, students are being asked to consider how an area of similarity or difference is treated within or across texts.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on explaining the relationships between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a range of informational texts. The Grade 6 standard progresses to comparing and contrasting regional, national, and/or multicultural perspectives within and across informational texts. This requires students to synthesize broader knowledge of the world with what they read in a text, reflecting a growing knowledge base as well as a more sophisticated understanding of the text.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in Developing can likely: **Describe** regional, national, and/or multicultural perspectives within and/or across informational text(s). DOK: 2–3	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in On Track can likely: **Compare and contrast** regional, national, and/or multicultural perspectives within and across informational texts. DOK: 2–3	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found at the intersection of Grade 6 and Grade 7, a student performing in Advanced can likely: **Explain** how the author(s) develops regional, national, and/or multicultural perspectives within and across informational texts. DOK: 2–3
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will describe regional, national, and/or multicultural perspectives within or across informational texts. Items should avoid stereotypes and negative portrayals of any given culture. • Stems can include a specific detail from the text and ask what that detail suggests about the perspective of the author, individual, or a group of people. For example: "Read this sentence from the passage. 'One reason the United States is behind other countries in developing high-speed trains is because people in the U.S. like being able to hop in their cars and drive whenever they want.' What does this sentence suggest about people in the U.S.? The correct answer would be, "They value individual freedom." • Items can also ask students to describe the perspective in each of two texts.	Students will compare and/or contrast regional, national, and/or multicultural perspectives within or across informational texts. Answer options should avoid stereotypes and negative portrayals of any given culture. • Stems can ask students to explain a similarity or difference between the perspective of the author, individuals, and/or groups of people. For example, "Based on the text, what is the most likely reason high-speed trains are popular in Japan, China, and France but not in the United States?" with the correct answer being, "People in Japan, China, and France view high-speed trains as a fast and reliable way to travel, while people in the United States prefer the comfort and convenience of driving in cars." • Alternatively, a technology-enhanced item could ask students to move descriptions of similarities and differences between an author's and a country's perspective on high-speed trains into a table that is organized like a Venn diagram.	Students will explain how the author(s) develops regional, national, and/or multicultural perspectives within or across informational texts. Answer options should avoid stereotypes and negative portrayals of any given culture. • Stems can ask students to explain how an author develops two or more regional, national, or multicultural perspectives in a text. For example, "How does the author contrast the way people in Japan and the United States view high-speed trains?" with the correct answer being, "by including interviews with passengers from both countries" and a plausible distractor being, "by describing the operations of the busiest station in each country." • Stems for Part B, if included, can ask for textual evidence to support the correct answer to Part A, either in the form of direct quotations or paraphrased details.

Item Specifications for Vocabulary Standards

LA.6.V.1.a

Content Strand	Vocabulary
Anchor Standard	Acquisition and Use Build and use a range of conversational, academic, and discipline-specific grade-level vocabulary and apply to reading, writing, speaking, and listening.
Standard	LA.6.V.1 Integrate grade-level academic vocabulary appropriately for a variety of tasks and purposes.
Indicator	LA.6.V.1.a Use context clues (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) to determine the meanings of words and phrases.
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.V.1.a asks students to: -Use **context clues** to determine the meanings of **words and phrases**. **Context clues** are hints given within a text that help to define an unfamiliar word or phrase. Context clues can be explicit in the text or implicit, and they can take many forms. They can be the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph, a word's position or function in a sentence, a definition, example, restatement, cause/effect relationship, comparison, or explanation in the text. For assessment, this standard should focus on unknown **words and phrases**, meaning those that are above grade level and likely unfamiliar to students. In addition, priority should be given to assessing above-grade-level academic vocabulary embedded in complex, grade-level texts. Academic vocabulary refers to words and phrases that are likely to appear in a variety of content area texts (e.g., ELA, math, science, social studies). However, target words and phrases for this standard may also include conversational or discipline-specific vocabulary. Finding appropriate target words and phrases requires carefully reviewing the text for challenging language that is also central to the text's meaning. The target word or phrase should be one not typically known by students at this grade, so there must be sufficient context in the text to determine meaning.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on using context clues, such as definitions, examples, restatements, cause/effect relationships, and comparisons in text to determine the meanings of words and phrases. The Grade 6 standard introduces two new strategies for using context clues, the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph and a word's position or function in a sentence. This shows that students continue to expand their word-solving skills as they progress through the grades.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in Developing can likely: **Use explicit context clues** (e.g., cause/effect relationships and comparisons in text) to determine the meanings of words and phrases. DOK: 1	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in On Track can likely: **Use context clues** (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) to determine the meanings of words and phrases. DOK: 1–2	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found at the intersection of Grade 6 and Grade 7, a student performing in Advanced can likely: **Use implicit context clues** (e.g., high-level inference) to determine the meanings of words and phrases. DOK: 2
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will use explicit context clues to determine the meaning of an above-grade-level word or phrase in a literary or informational text. • Stems can ask students to choose the meaning of an unknown, above-grade-level word or phrase that is central to the text based on an explicit context clue in the text. For example, in an informational text about Yellowstone National Park, a sentence might read, "To get to Yellowstone National Park, we had to find ways around the debris scattered all over the road after the storm, which made travel difficult" The next sentence says, "The many branches, overturned trees, and loose boulders presented quite the challenge for our little car." The context clues of "branches, overturned trees, and loose boulders" provide explicit examples of debris, revealing its meaning as "broken or destroyed pieces of something."	Students will use context clues to determine the meaning of an above-grade-level word or phrase in a literary or informational text. • Stems can ask students to choose the meaning of an unknown, above-grade-level word or phrase that is central to the text based on explicit or implicit context clues elsewhere in the passage. For example, an informational text about Yellowstone National Park might begin with the sentence, "When I visited Yellowstone National Park, I was captivated by its many geographical wonders and stunningly varied wildlife." The context clues include the idea that captivated is used as a verb in combination with "was," and the words "wonders" and "stunningly" both connote awe or amazement. • Stems can also ask students to identify the word or words in the text that best help the reader understand the meaning of captivated. Distractors would represent a misunderstanding of context and therefore be clearly not useful in determining word meaning.	Students will use implicit context clues to determine the meaning of an above-grade-level word or phrase in a literary or informational text. • Stems can be similar to the item approach for On Track. However, for the Advanced ALD, determining the meaning of a word or phrase requires deeper inferencing, likely involving the use of multiple context clues. • Alternatively, a two-part item might ask students for the meaning of the word or phrase in Part A and the context clue(s) that best support that meaning in Part B. Distractors would represent a misunderstanding of context and therefore be clearly not useful in determining word meaning.

LA.6.V.1.b

Content Strand	Vocabulary
Anchor Standard	Acquisition and Use Build and use a range of conversational, academic, and discipline-specific grade-level vocabulary and apply to reading, writing, speaking, and listening.
Standard	LA.6.V.1 Integrate grade-level academic vocabulary appropriately for a variety of tasks and purposes.
Indicator	LA.6.V.1.b Use commonly occurring Greek and Latin affixes and roots to determine the meanings of words (e.g., audience, audible).
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.V.1.b asks students to both: • Determine the meaning of commonly occurring Greek and Latin **affixes** (prefixes and suffixes) and **roots** in words; and • Use commonly occurring Greek and Latin affixes and roots to determine the meaning of **words**. **Affixes** refer to both prefixes and suffixes. A prefix is an affix placed at the beginning of a word to modify its meaning (e.g., "mis-" in "misunderstand"). A suffix is an affix placed at the end of a word to modify its meaning (e.g., "-ness" in "boldness"). A **root** word is the basic part of a word that carries its main meaning. It is often combined with prefixes and/or suffixes. For example, "audience" and "audible" both share the root word "-aud-," which means to hear. For assessment, this standard should focus on unknown **words**, meaning those that are above grade level and likely unfamiliar to students. Academic vocabulary refers to words and phrases that are likely to appear in a variety of content area texts (e.g., ELA, math, science, social studies). Academic vocabulary should be prioritized, as it includes many words with the same root word but different affixes (e.g., construct, construction, reconstruct).
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on using commonly occurring Greek and Latin affixes and roots to determine the meaning of words. The Grade 6 standard remains the same, emphasizing that students need wide exposure to affixes and roots to build a strong vocabulary.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in Developing can likely: **Determine the meaning of commonly occurring Greek and Latin affixes and roots in words.** DOK: 1	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in On Track can likely: **Use commonly occurring Greek and Latin affixes and roots to determine the meanings of words** (e.g., audience, audible). DOK: 1–2	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found at the intersection of Grade 6 and Grade 7, a student performing in Advanced can likely: Use **complex** Greek and Latin affixes and roots to determine the meanings of words and phrases (e.g., antecedent, prohibit). DOK: 1–2
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will determine the meaning of commonly occurring Greek/Latin affixes and/or roots in words in a literary or informational text. • Stems should ask students to determine the meaning of affixes or roots in words that use common affixes or roots. Common Grade 6 affixes might include -ment, -less, -ly, mis-, and dis-, among others. Common roots for the grade might include -aqua- (water), -form- (shape), and -port- (carry), among others. here must be context to support the meaning. The stem could read, "In paragraph 10, the author says, 'Some people oppose high-speed trains because they <u>misinterpret</u> the cost of building them.' What is the meaning of the prefix mis- in the word '<u>misinterpret</u>'?"	Students will use commonly occurring Greek/Latin affixes and/or roots to determine the meaning of an unknown word or phrase in a literary or informational text. • Stems should ask students to determine the meaning of an unknown word or phrase that includes a common affix or root word for the grade level. The stem may include a culled sentence from the text with the target word. For example: "This sentence is from the passage. 'The park rangers use <u>portable</u> radios to communicate with one another as they monitor the park, ensuring the safety of visitors and the wildlife.' What does the word <u>portable</u> mean in the sentence?" The correct answer should emphasize the meaning of -port-, which means "to carry," so the correct answer would be "easy to carry." The distractors should be plausible meanings of the word based on the context (e.g., important for protection).	Students will use complex Greek/Latin affixes and/or roots to determine the meaning or relationship of words or phrases in a literary or informational text. • Stems can be similar to the item approach for On Track, but the items for Advanced should focus on more complex affixes/roots and/or provide fewer explicit definitions of affixes/roots.

LA.6.V.2.a

Content Strand	Vocabulary
Anchor Standard	Context and Connotation Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
Standard	LA.6.V.2 Interpret an author's use of figurative, connotative, and technical language in grade-level literary and informational text.
Indicator	LA.6.V.2.a Interpret figures of speech (e.g., literary, biblical, or mythological allusions) in context.
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.V.2.a asks students to both: • Identify **figures of speech**, (e.g., **literary, biblical, or mythological allusions**) in context; and • Interpret figures of speech (e.g., literary, biblical, or mythological allusions) in context. **Figures of speech** are expressions that use words in a non-literal way to create an effect or convey a deeper meaning. They often involve comparisons (e.g., similes, metaphors), exaggerations (e.g., personification), or allusions (i.e., references to well-known stories or events). A **literary allusion** is a figure of speech that refers to a well-known work of literature. "She felt like she had entered the rabbit hole" refers to Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and suggests that the situation she found herself in was strange and confusing, much like Alice's experiences. A **biblical allusion** is a figure of speech that refers to a biblical story, character, or event. "It was a David and Goliath battle" suggests a conflict between two very unequal opponents, where the weaker one might prevail, as in the biblical story. A **mythological allusion** is a figure of speech that refers to a character, story, or event from mythology. "It was a Herculean task" refers to the Greek myth of Hercules and suggests that the task was extremely difficult and required great effort, similar to the labors of Hercules. The target figure of speech should be embedded in a context-rich passage to avoid cultural or linguistic bias.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on interpreting figurative language, including similes and metaphors, in context. The Grade 6 standard adds literary, biblical, and mythological allusions as examples of figures of speech, suggesting that students are expected to have a broader understanding of how authors use figurative language to convey meaning.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in Developing can likely: **Identify** figures of speech (e.g., literary, biblical, or mythological allusions) in context. DOK: 1	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in On Track can likely: **Interpret** figures of speech (e.g., literary, biblical, or mythological allusions) in context. DOK: 2	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found at the intersection of Grade 6 and Grade 7, a student performing in Advanced can likely: Interpret **complex figures of speech** (e.g., literary, biblical, or mythological allusions) **with minimal contextual support**. DOK: 3
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will identify a figure of speech (e.g., literary, biblical, or mythological allusions) in a literary or informational text. • Stems can ask students which sentence from the text includes figurative language or a particular type of figurative language. Stems may also be more general, asking which sentence uses a comparison or reference for a particular purpose. For example, "Which sentence uses a literary reference to make a vivid description?" with the correct answer being "As Jae walked through Yellowstone, she felt like Alice stepping into Wonderland, discovering a whole new world."	Students will interpret a figure of speech in a literary or informational text. • Stems can ask students to explain the author's intended purpose when using figurative language, such as an allusion. There should be context to help support the interpretation. For example: "In the passage, the author says, 'As Jae walked through Yellowstone, she felt like Alice stepping into Wonderland, discovering a whole new world.' What is the author emphasizing by referring to *Alice in Wonderland*?" The correct answer would be, "how different Yellowstone looks from Jae's normal environment." Distractors would include a misunderstanding of the reference or the context, such as "Jae was dreaming of being at Yellowstone," or "how long it had been since Jae had been somewhere new."	Students will interpret a complex figure of speech with minimal contextual support in a literary or informational text. • Stems can be similar to the item approach for On Track, but the items for Advanced should assess more complex figures of speech, including allusions. For example, a grade-level text about Yellowstone National Park might include the allusion, "As I watched the beautiful bison roam freely across the plains of Yellowstone, it felt like I was witnessing the majestic creatures of Zeus's realm." The stem could be "Why does the author reference Zeus, the king of the Greek gods?" with the answer focusing on the awe-inspiring aspects of the creatures in the park, such as their size, beauty, and power.

LA.6.V.2.b

Content Strand	Vocabulary
Anchor Standard	Context and Connotation Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
Standard	LA.6.V.2 Interpret an author's use of figurative, connotative, and technical language in grade-level literary and informational text.
Indicator	LA.6.V.2.b Determine the relationship between words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category).
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.V.2.b asks students to: • Determine the relationship between words (e.g., **cause/effect**, **part/whole**, **item/category**). A **cause/effect** relationship is when one word represents an action or event (the cause), and the other word represents the result or outcome of that action or event (the effect). For example, exercise (cause) and fitness (effect). A **part/whole** relationship is when one word represents a part of something, and the other word represents the whole thing. For example, leaf (part) and tree (whole). An **item/category** relationship is when one word represents a specific item, and the other word represents the broader category to which the item belongs. For example, rose (item) and flower (category). **Technical language** is subject-specific, Tier 3 vocabulary. The intent of this standard is for students to use their knowledge of word relationships (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to understand the meanings of words. Since knowledge of word relationships requires a deeper understanding of words, target words should be on or below grade level and embedded in a context-rich asset.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on demonstrating knowledge of relationships between particular words (e.g., synonyms, antonyms, homographs) to better understand each of the words. The Grade 6 standard adds three new types of word relationships, cause/effect, part/whole, and item/category, reflecting an even deeper level of word knowledge.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in Developing can likely: **Identify** simple connections between words. DOK: 1	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in On Track can likely: **Determine** the relationship between words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category). DOK: 1–2	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found at the intersection of Grade 6 and Grade 7, a student performing in Advanced can likely: **Use** the relationship between words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words. DOK: 2
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will identify simple connections between words. • Stems can ask students to identify simple connections between on or below-grade-level words in a literary or informational text. For example, in an informational text about Yellowstone National Park, a sentence might read, "Within the park, visitors will encounter rivers, forests, mountains, canyons, and even a lake!" The question would ask, "What is the relationship between the words 'rivers,' 'forests,' 'mountains,' 'canyons,' and 'lake'?" The answer would be, "They are all things that can be seen in the park."	Students will determine the relationship between words. • Stems can ask students to determine the relationship between on or below-grade-level words in a literary or informational text. For example, using the same sentence from an informational text about Yellowstone National Park, the stem would ask, "What is the relationship between the word 'canyon' and 'landform," with the correct answer being "A canyon is a type of landform." Distractors would be "a canyon is made of landforms," etc.	Students will use the relationship between words to better understand each of the words. • Stems can ask students to use the relationship between on or below-grade-level words in a literary or informational text to better understand each of the words. For example, another excerpt from the informational text about Yellowstone National Park might read, "The <u>damaging</u> forest fires in Yellowstone National Park can also benefit the area by helping new plants grow. The fires <u>clear</u> old vegetation, which allows sunlight to reach the forest floor and provides nutrients for new seedlings to sprout." The question would ask, "Which sentence best describes the relationship between the words <u>damaging</u> and <u>clear</u> in these sentences?" The correct answer would be, "They have a cause/effect relationship because the damaging fires are what clear old vegetation, making room for new plants to grow."

LA.6.V.2.c

Content Strand	Vocabulary
Anchor Standard	Context and Connotation Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.
Standard	LA.6.V.2 Interpret an author's use of figurative, connotative, and technical language in grade-level literary and informational text.
Indicator	LA.6.V.2.c Distinguish between the connotations of words with similar denotations (e.g., economical, thrifty).
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.V.2.c asks students to both: • Identify or categorize words based on connotations and denotations; and • Distinguish between the **connotations** of words with similar **denotations**. The intent of this standard is for students to determine the shades of meanings among related words, distinguishing between their **denotation**, or dictionary definition, and **connotation**, or the emotional associations that a word has beyond its dictionary definition. If a character in a story is described as "thrifty," for example, students should be asked to consider what qualities the word "thrifty" suggests that words with similar denotations (e.g., frugal, stingy, cheap) do not. In this case, the author may be trying to show that the character is wise and careful with money, which has a positive connotation, rather than overly cautious (frugal), unwilling to share (stingy), or lacking in generosity (cheap), which all have negative connotations. **Technical language** is subject-specific, Tier 3 vocabulary. Since distinguishing nuanced meanings of words requires a deeper understanding of those words, target words should be at or below grade level and embedded in context.
Progression from Previous Grade	There is no specific Grade 5 standard for distinguishing nuances of meaning between related words, though there is a Grade 3 standard (LA.3.V.2.c). The Grade 6 standard focuses on distinguishing between the connotations of words with similar denotations (e.g., economical, thrifty), which requires a deeper knowledge of individual words to determine the subtle differences in word meanings.
Achievement Level Descriptors	

Developing	On Track	Advanced
With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in Developing can likely: **Identify or categorize** words based on connotations and denotations. DOK: 1	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found in Grade 6, a student performing in On Track can likely: **Distinguish between** the connotations of words with similar denotations (e.g., economical, thrifty). DOK: 1–2	With a range of texts with text complexity commonly found at the intersection of Grade 6 and Grade 7, a student performing in Advanced can likely: Distinguish between the connotations of **complex** words with similar denotations (e.g., clever, cunning). DOK: 1–2
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will identify or categorize words based on connotations and denotations. • Stems can ask students to identify or categorize on or below-grade-level words in a literary or informational text based on connotations and denotations. Because context will be key to determining the intent of the word, sentences should be pulled from the text itself. For example, "Which sentence from the passage includes an underlined word that has a positive meaning?" The options could be: "The sensible visitors keep their distance from the geyser so they don't put themselves in danger," (correct answer), "Some stubborn tourists do not listen to the guidance of posted signs," "Skin can be sensitive to some of the plant life, so be careful and watch what you touch," and "Animals can be rather simple, but some in the park are extremely intelligent."	Students will distinguish between the connotations of words with similar denotations. • Stems can ask students to distinguish between the connotations of on or below-grade-level words in a literary or informational text based on connotations and denotations. For example: "Read this sentence from the passage. 'Visiting Yellowstone National Park can be cheap but just as rewarding if you camp instead of staying in a hotel.' Which word best shows the meaning of cheap as it is used in the sentence?" The options would be: affordable (correct answer), inferior, stingy, worthless. Here, the options are all possible connotations of the word "cheap," but they each highlight different aspects: affordable is a positive connotation that suggests something is reasonably priced; stingy is a negative connotation that implies being unwilling to spend money; inferior is a negative connotation that suggests poor quality; worthless is a very negative connotation that implies having no value or use.	Students will distinguish between the connotations of complex words with similar denotations. • Stems can be similar to the item approach for On Track. However, items for Advanced should focus on more complex words, though they should still be on or below-grade-level.

Item Specifications for Writing Standards

LA.6.W.1.a

Content Strand	Writing
Anchor Standard	Production of Writing Use a recursive writing process to produce clear and coherent writing appropriate to the discipline, audience, and/or context.
Standard	LA.6.W.1 Create grammatically correct multi-paragraph compositions with varied sentence structures
Indicator	LA.6.W.1.a Apply knowledge of rules for capitalization.
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.W.1.a asks students to: • Apply knowledge of **rules for capitalization**. The **rules for capitalization** include: 1) Capitalizing the first word of a sentence, 2) Capitalizing proper nouns (e.g., names of people, places, and specific things), 3) Capitalizing titles when used with names (e.g., Mr., Mrs., Dr.), 4) Capitalizing days of the week, months, and holidays, 5) Capitalizing the pronoun "I," 6) Capitalizing the first word in a direct quotation, 7) Capitalizing the names of specific courses (e.g., History 101, Algebra II), 8) Capitalizing the names of historical events and periods (e.g., the Renaissance, World War II), 9) Capitalizing the names of organizations, institutions, and government bodies (e.g., the United Nations, Harvard University), and 10) Capitalizing the names of planets and celestial bodies (e.g., Mars, the Milky Way).
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on applying knowledge of rules for capitalization and using proper formatting or punctuation to indicate the titles of works. The Grade 6 standard narrows to focus just on the rules for capitalization but requires students to demonstrate a more complete understanding of capitalization rules.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
Apply knowledge of **some rules** for capitalization. DOK: 1	Apply knowledge of **rules** for capitalization. DOK: 1	**Consistently** apply knowledge of rules for capitalization. DOK: 1
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will apply knowledge of some rules of capitalization. • Stems can ask students to identify examples of correct capitalization. Items for this standard can be presented without an asset, as context is unnecessary to assess the skill. Stems can simply ask, "Which sentence is correctly capitalized?" The options should be variations of the same sentence. Also, in keeping with the spirit of the ALD, items should require the application of more common capitalization rules, such as capitalization of names, proper nouns, or titles. For example, "Last Monday was Independence Day" (correct answer), with distractors such as, "Last Monday was Independence day," "Last Monday was independence day," etc.	Students will apply knowledge of rules for capitalization. • Stems can be similar to the item approach for Developing, but items for On Track can ask students to apply all capitalization rules and use less common examples. As in Developing, the item should be presented without an asset, as context is unnecessary to assess the skill. Stems can simply ask, "Which sentence is correctly capitalized?" The options do not need to be variations of the same sentence as in Developing, and they can include examples of multiple capitalization rules or errors. For example, the correct answer might be, "Next April, Dr. Smith will give a lecture at Harvard University." Distractors might include: "During world war two, battles were fought in Europe and Asia," and "At Sunnyside elementary, students learn to speak Spanish."	Students will consistently apply knowledge of rules for capitalization. • Stems can ask students to apply all capitalization rules, and a Multiple-select or technology-enhanced item type can be used to assess consistent application of capitalization rules. For example, a Gap Match item can be used that asks students to move correctly and incorrectly capitalized titles, phrases, and sentences into a clearly labeled chart. • Alternatively, students can be presented with a short stimulus text with multiple opportunities to choose between options, with the correct answer demonstrating correct capitalization. For example, the stimulus might read "Next April, _____ (dr. Smith/Dr. Smith) will give a lecture at _____ (Harvard University/Harvard university) about the most important battles of _____ (World War II, world war II)." • Additionally, options for any type of item can include more complex or less common words or phrases to be capitalized. For example, an option might include the name "Leonardo da Vinci," which is capitalized irregularly, or a long title such as "Riding the Waves: My Summer as a Surfer on the Pacific Ocean."

LA.6.W.1.b

Content Strand	Writing
Anchor Standard	Production of Writing Use a recursive writing process to produce clear and coherent writing appropriate to the discipline, audience, and/or context.
Standard	LA.6.W.1 Create grammatically correct multi-paragraph compositions with varied sentence structures
Indicator	LA.6.W.1.b Use punctuation (e.g., commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off non-restrictive clauses.
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.W.1.b asks students to: • Use punctuation (e.g., commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off **non-restrictive clauses**. A **non-restrictive clause** is a part of a sentence that adds extra information but is not essential to the meaning of the sentence. If you remove the non-restrictive clause, the sentence still makes sense. Punctuation is used to set off non-restrictive clauses because it helps to clearly separate the extra information from the main part of the sentence, making the sentence easier to read and understand. Writers can use commas, parentheses, or dashes to set off non-restrictive clauses. • **Comma example:** My dog, who loves to play fetch, is very energetic. • **Parentheses example:** The book (which was a bestseller) is now out of print. • **Dashes example:** The car—a red convertible—was parked outside.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on using commas to separate an introductory element from the rest of a sentence, to separate clauses, to set off a question, and to indicate direct address. The Grade 6 standard narrows to using different types of punctuation (e.g., commas, parentheses, and dashes) to set off non-restrictive clauses. This requires a more advanced understanding of both punctuation and sentence structure.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
Use commas to set off non-restrictive clauses. DOK: 1	Use **punctuation** (e.g., commas, **parentheses, dashes**) to set off non-restrictive clauses. DOK: 1	**Consistently** use punctuation (e.g., commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off non-restrictive clauses. DOK: 1
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will use commas to set off non-restrictive clauses. • Stems can ask students to identify correctly written sentences that include non-restrictive clauses set off by commas. Because context is unnecessary, there is no need to have a stimulus sentence. Instead, items can simply ask, "Which sentence uses commas correctly?" The options would be four versions of the same sentence. For example, the options might include: "The racehorse, its coat glistening in the sun, sped around the track" (correct answer), "The racehorse its coat glistening in the sun, sped around the track," "The racehorse, its coat glistening in the sun sped around the track," etc. • Alternatively, the options could present four different sentences that have non-restrictive clauses and ask students to identify the one that uses commas correctly.	Students will use punctuation (e.g., commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off non-restrictive clauses. • Stems can be similar to the item approach for Developing, but the sentences in the options may also use parentheses or dashes to set off non-restrictive clauses. In addition, the question should ask, "Which sentence is punctuated correctly?" Finally, all four options within a single item should include just one type of punctuation—either commas, parentheses, OR dashes—rather than mixing different types of punctuation.	Students will consistently use punctuation (e.g., commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off non-restrictive clauses. • Stems can be similar to the item approach for On Track. However, in order to assess consistent use, items for Advanced should require students to demonstrate the correct use of punctuation to set off non-restrictive clauses in more than one sentence. For example, Multi-select items could present students with five sentences that include non-restrictive clauses, some punctuated correctly, and others punctuated incorrectly, and students would have to choose two correct answers.

LA.6.W.1.c

Content Strand	Writing
Anchor Standard	Production of Writing Use a recursive writing process to produce clear and coherent writing appropriate to the discipline, audience, and/or context.
Standard	LA.6.W.1 Create grammatically correct multi-paragraph compositions with varied sentence structures
Indicator	LA.6.W.1.c Use a colon to introduce items in a series; use a semicolon to combine independent clauses.
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.W.1.c asks students to: • Use a colon to **introduce items in a series**; or • Use a semicolon to **combine independent clauses**. A colon is used to **introduce items in a series** when the series follows an independent clause (a complete sentence). The colon signals that what comes next is directly related to the preceding clause. For example, "We need several things for the trip: a map, a flashlight, and snacks." A semicolon is used to **combine independent clauses** when the clauses are closely related in thought but could stand alone as separate sentences. The semicolon helps to show the connection between the two ideas without using a conjunction like "and" or "but." For example, "He loves to read books; his favorite genre is fantasy."
Progression from Previous Grade	There is no Grade 5 standard for using colons or semicolons, though there is a Grade 5 standard that addresses comma use (LA.5.W.1.b). The Grade 6 standard introduces this punctuation and focuses on using a colon to introduce items in a series and using a semicolon to combine independent clauses. This shows that students are expected to write more complex sentences.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
Use a colon to introduce items in a series. DOK: 1	Use a colon to introduce items in a series; **use a semicolon to combine independent clauses.** DOK: 1	**Consistently** use a colon to introduce items in a series; **consistently** use a semicolon to combine independent clauses. DOK: 1
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will use a colon to introduce items in a series. • Stems can ask students to identify correctly written sentences that include the use of a colon introducing a series. Because context is unnecessary, there is no need to have a stimulus sentence. Instead, items can simply ask, "Which sentence is punctuated correctly?" The options could be four different versions of the same sentence or four different sentences containing lists. The errors should include either misplaced or omitted colons, but all other punctuation within the sentence should be correct. For example, options could include: "The baker gathered ingredients to make a cake: flour, sugar, and eggs" (correct answer), "The baker: gathered ingredients to make a cake: flour, sugar, and eggs," "The baker gathered ingredients to make a cake flour, sugar, and eggs," etc. •Alternatively, the stem could present a single stimulus sentence with a blank where the colon could go. The stem would prompt students to select the punctuation that correctly fills the blank, and options would be different types of punctuation (e.g., a colon, a period, a semi-colon, a comma).	Students will use a colon to introduce items in a series, or they will use a semicolon to combine independent clauses. • For the first option, stems can be similar to the item approaches for Developing. • For the second option, stems can take similar approaches, but the items should address the use of semicolons to combine independent clauses. For example, options could include: "The baker gathered ingredients to make a cake; she wanted to make something special for a family celebration" (correct answer), "The baker gathered ingredients to make a special cake; flour, sugar, and eggs," "The baker gathered ingredients; to make a cake for a family celebration," etc.	Students will consistently use a colon to introduce items in a series, and they will consistently use a semi-colon to combine independent clauses. • Stems can be similar to the item approaches for On Track. However, in order to assess consistent use, items for Advanced should use a Multi-select format, having students select two or more sentences that are punctuated correctly. The options can combine examples of using colons to introduce items in a series and using semicolons to combine independent clauses.

LA.6.W.1.d

Content Strand	Writing
Anchor Standard	Production of Writing Use a recursive writing process to produce clear and coherent writing appropriate to the discipline, audience, and/or context.
Standard	LA.6.W.1 Create grammatically correct multi-paragraph compositions with varied sentence structures
Indicator	LA.6.W.1.d Explain the function of articles (e.g., definite and indefinite) and apply knowledge to writing.
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.W.1.d asks students to: • Explain the function of **articles** (e.g., **definite** and **indefinite**); and/or • Apply knowledge to writing (i.e., identify and use articles). **Articles** are words that define a noun as specific or unspecific. They help clarify whether a writer or speaker is referring to something in particular or something more general. **Definite** articles are used to refer to a specific noun that is known to the reader or listener. The definite article in English is "the." For example, "The cat sat on the mat." **Indefinite** articles are used to refer to a non-specific noun. The indefinite articles in English are "a" and "an." For example, "An apple fell from a tree." Applying knowledge of articles to writing means using "the" when referring to a specific item that both the writer and reader are aware of and using "a" or "an" when referring to any item of a particular type, not one specific item. This helps make writing clearer and more precise.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard (LA.5.W.1.c) focuses on explaining the function of and using frequently occurring interjections, verb tenses (e.g., perfect) and correlative conjunctions. The Grade 6 standard narrows to explaining the function of articles (e.g., definite and indefinite) and applying this knowledge to writing. This standard is also the last one focused on the function and use of different parts of speech.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
Identify and/or use articles in writing. DOK: 1	**Explain the function of articles (e.g., definite and indefinite) and apply knowledge to writing.** DOK: 1–2	**Analyze** the function of articles (e.g., definite and indefinite) and apply knowledge to writing. DOK: 1–2
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will identify and/or use articles in writing. • To identify articles, items may simply ask students to identify the articles in a sentence or group of sentences. • To assess use in a technology-enhanced item, students may be given a short stimulus with three (3) articles to choose from for each blank, with the correct answer being the appropriate article to use in the sentence. For example, the sentences in a Hot Text item might read, "The book on (a / an / **the**) _____ table is mine. I will read it in _____ (a / an / **the**) morning." The same effect could be achieved using a Gap Match item in which students move the correct articles into the blanks in the sentences. Note that in a Gap Match item, none of the articles should be at the beginning of the sentence so that capitalization doesn't clue the correct response.	Students will explain the function of definite and indefinite articles and/or apply their knowledge to writing. • Stems can present a writing scenario and then ask students to explain whether a definite or indefinite article would be the best choice for the scenario. For example, the stem might read, "Ravi wants to write a sentence that shows he is going out to dinner with his aunt but does not know where. Which sentence best meets Ravi's goal?" The correct answer would be, "We are going to a restaurant for dinner." The distractors would use articles incorrectly (e.g., "We are going to an restaurant for dinner," "We are going to the restaurant for dinner") or include other errors that are plausible replacements for articles (e.g., "We are going to this restaurant for dinner.").	Students will analyze the function of definite and indefinite articles and apply their knowledge to writing. • Items can provide a single-sentence stimulus with one article and noun underlined. The stem will ask students why the writer chose to use the underlined article, with the correct response relating to whether the sentence describes a specific noun or a general noun. For example, the stimulus sentence might read, "They saw a movie at <u>the theater</u>" followed by a question asking why the author chose to use the word "the" instead of "a" before theater. The options could include: to show that the author was referring to a specific theater (correct answer), to show that the author was not sure where the movie was playing, to show that the location of the theater was important, to show that the author did not care which theater they went to.

LA.6.W.1.e

Content Strand	Writing
Anchor Standard	Production of Writing Use a recursive writing process to produce clear and coherent writing appropriate to the discipline, audience, and/or context.
Standard	LA.6.W.1 Create grammatically correct multi-paragraph compositions with varied sentence structures
Indicator	LA.6.W.1.e Identify and use verb tenses (e.g., progressive).
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.W.1.e asks students to both: • Identify **verb tenses**; and • Use verb tenses (e.g., **progressive**). A **verb tense** is a form of a verb that shows the time of an action or state of being. Verb tenses help us understand when something happens, whether it is in the past, present, or future. The **progressive** verb tense is used to describe actions that are ongoing or continuing at a specific time. It includes a form of the verb "to be" (am, is, are, was, were) followed by the present participle (the -ing form of the verb). For example, "She is running" (present progressive), "They were playing" (past progressive), and "I will be studying" (future progressive).
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard (LA.5.W.1.c) focuses on explaining the function of and using verb tenses (e.g., perfect). The Grade 6 standard progresses to identifying and using verb tenses (e.g., progressive), showing that students are expected to have a stronger understanding of how verb tenses are used in writing.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
Identify verb tenses (e.g., progressive). DOK: 1	Identify **and use** verb tenses (e.g., progressive). DOK: 1–2	**Consistently** identify and use verb tenses (e.g., progressive). DOK: 1–2
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will identify verb tense. • Stems can ask students to identify the tense of a verb in a sentence or in multiple sentences. Sentences and verb tenses should be appropriate for the grade level. Alternately, stems can ask which sentence uses a given verb tense. • Alternatively, students can move sentences to columns labeled with a description of the verb tense. Columns could be labeled "already happened" and "happening now" with options such as "The dog drank all the water," "Maria is studying for her test," and "They said they had eaten a good breakfast."	Students will identify and use verb tenses. • Stems can ask students to select verbs or verb phrases to complete sentences. Stems could use a description of a verb tense or its name. For example, "Which word or words would complete the sentence to show that the action has already happened." Or "Which word or words would complete the sentence to show past tense? The stimulus sentence might read, "The thirsty horse _____ a huge bucket of water." The options would include: drank (correct answer), drinks, is drinking, will drink.	Students will consistently identify and use verb tenses. • Stems can be similar to the item approaches for On Track. However, in order to assess consistent use, items for Advanced should use a Multi-select format which asks students to identify all sentences among the options given that are written in a certain verb tense (e.g., progressive), drag the correct verb to each blank, etc.

LA.6.W.1.f

Content Strand	Writing
Anchor Standard	Production of Writing Use a recursive writing process to produce clear and coherent writing appropriate to the discipline, audience, and/or context.
Standard	LA.6.W.1 Create grammatically correct multi-paragraph compositions with varied sentence structures
Indicator	LA.6.W.1.f Distinguish between and use different types of phrases (e.g., prepositional and appositive).
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.W.1.f asks students to both: • Identify different types of phrases; and • Distinguish between and use different types of phrases (e.g., **prepositional** and **appositive**). **Prepositional phrases** are groups of words that begin with a preposition and provide additional information about time, location, or direction. For example, "Inside the mysterious cave" or "Next to the roaring waterfall." **Appositive phrases** are groups of words that rename or provide more information about a noun. For example, "Sparky, <u>my pet dragon</u>, is difficult to take on a walk." or "Amelia Earhart, <u>the famous explorer</u>, was the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean."
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard (LA.5.W.1.d) focuses on distinguishing between and using different types of adjectives, such as comparative and superlative adjectives. The Grade 6 standard progresses to distinguishing between and using different types of phrases, such as prepositional and appositive phrases. This shows that students are becoming more sophisticated in their understanding of grammar.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
Identify different types of phrases (e.g., prepositional and appositive). DOK: 1	**Distinguish between and use** different types of phrases (e.g., prepositional and appositive). DOK: 1–2	**Consistently** distinguish between and use different types of phrases (e.g., prepositional and appositive). DOK: 1–2
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will identify different types of phrases, such as propositional phrases and appositive phrases. • Stems can ask students to identify the prepositional or appositive phrase in a short stimulus sentence, either by labeling it or by usage. For example, students would read the following sentence: "The sleek, black horse ran swiftly around the track, its mane flowing in the wind as the crowd cheered from the stands." The stem would ask, "Which part of the sentence shows where the horse ran?" Or "Which part of the sentence is a prepositional phrase?" The options would include: sleek, black; ran swiftly, and around the track (correct answer), and mane flowing,. .	Students will distinguish between and use different types of phrases, such as prepositional and appositive phrases. • Stems can ask students to add phrases (prepositional or appositive) to sentences in a short stimulus in a Hot Text item format. For example, "Choose the phrase that best completes each sentence." The stimulus could be, "The sleek, black horse ran swiftly _____ (**around the track** / the fastest horse in the state). The horse's mane, _____, (a champion racer / **a shimmering wave of black hair**) flowed in the wind as the horse passed the cheering crowd at the finish line."	Students will consistently distinguish between and use different types of phrases, such as prepositional phrases, appositive phrases, adjective phrases, and/or adverb phrases. • Stems can be similar to the item approach for On Track, but students should be asked to distinguish between additional types of phrases, such as adjective and adverb phrases. Also, the stimuli may be longer and more complex, and it may include a third blank to allow students to demonstrate consistent use of different types of phrases.

LA.6.W.1.g

Content Strand	Writing
Anchor Standard	Production of Writing Use a recursive writing process to produce clear and coherent writing appropriate to the discipline, audience, and/or context.
Standard	LA.6.W.1 Create grammatically correct multi-paragraph compositions with varied sentence structures
Indicator	LA.6.W.1.g Identify and revise fragment and run-on sentences and inappropriate shifts in verb tenses.
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.W.1.g asks students to do one or more of the following: • Identify and revise **fragments**; or • Identify and revise **run-on sentences**; or • Identify and revise **inappropriate shifts in verb tenses**. A **fragment** is a group of words that does not form a complete sentence because it is missing a subject, a verb, or a complete thought. For example, "Without saying a word." A **run-on sentence** is a sentence in which two or more independent clauses are joined without proper punctuation or conjunctions. For example, "The sun was setting it was a beautiful sight." An **inappropriate shift in verb tense** is when a writer changes verb tenses within a sentence or paragraph in a way that confuses the reader. This can make the writing unclear and difficult to follow. For example, "He baked a cake and decorates it with icing." Here, the verb tense shifts from past tense "baked" to present tense "decorates."
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard (LA.5.W.1.e) focuses on identifying and revising fragment and run-on sentences and inappropriate shifts in verb tenses. The Grade 6 standard remains the same, showing that students can benefit from working on these writing skills for another year.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
Identify fragment and run-on sentences **and/or** inappropriate shifts in verb tenses. DOK: 1	Identify **and revise** fragment and run-on sentences **and** inappropriate shifts in verb tenses. DOK: 1–2	**Consistently** identify and revise fragment and run-on sentences and inappropriate shifts in verb tenses. DOK: 1–2
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will identify fragments, run-on sentences, or inappropriate shifts in verb tenses. • Stems can ask students to identify the incomplete sentence (fragment), run-on sentence, or sentence showing an inappropriate shift in verb tense among four options. Because context is unnecessary, there is no need to have a stimulus sentence. For example, "Choose the sentence fragment." The options would be: A) Fish swim. B) Can you draw? C) I went home right away. D) In the middle of the night. (correct answer) • If the item addresses sentence fragments, all options should be capitalized and punctuated as though they are complete sentences. • When assessing shifts in verb tense, the stem should ask a general question such as "Which sentence uses verbs correctly?" or "Which sentence includes an error in verb tense?"	Students will identify and revise fragments, run-on sentences, and/or inappropriate shifts in verb tenses. • Stems will ask students to revise a fragment, run-on sentence, or inappropriate shift in verb tense. A short stimulus should be provided, such as, "The baker gathers the ingredients and baked a cake." The question would ask, "Which sentence fixes the error?" When assessing verb tenses, incorrect options should have different incorrect shifts in tense. For example, the options could be: A) The baker gathered the ingredients and baked a cake. (correct answer) B) The baker will gather the ingredients and baked a cake. C) The baker gathers the ingredients and has baked a cake. D) The baker is gathering the ingredients and has baked a cake.	Students will consistently identify and revise fragments, run-on sentences, and inappropriate shifts in verb tenses. • Stems can ask students to sort sentences into groups in a Gap Match technology-enhanced item, moving run-ons and fragments into one column and complete sentences into another in a clearly labeled table. This same approach may be used to assess sentences written with no incorrect shifts in verb tense vs. problematic shifts in verb tense.

LA.6.W.3.a

Content Strand	Writing
Anchor Standard	Modes of Writing Write in a variety of modes for a variety of purposes and audiences across disciplines.
Standard	LA.6.W.3 Write in a variety of literary forms to convey real or imagined experiences or events in which the development and structure are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience.
Indicator	LA.6.W.3.a Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and introducing a narrator and/or character(s) and point of view; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.W.3.a asks students to do one or more of the following: • **Engage and orient the reader** by establishing a **context**, which may be sophisticated; or • **Introduce** a narrator and/or character(s) and **point of view**; or • **Organize an event sequence** that unfolds naturally and logically. In narrative writing, to **engage and orient the reader** means to capture the reader's interest and help them understand the setting, characters, and situation, or **context**, right from the beginning. A sophisticated context provides more detailed and nuanced background information, adding depth and complexity to the story. To **introduce** a narrator and/or characters means to give enough details about who they are and what they are like for the reader to understand their roles in the story. The **point of view** is the vantage point from which the story is told. It can be first person (using "I" or "we"), second person (using "you"), or third person (using "he," "she," "they," or a character's name). To **organize an event sequence** means to arrange the events of the story in a way that makes sense to the reader. This helps the story flow smoothly and ensures that the reader can follow the progression of events naturally.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on engaging and orienting the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or character(s). The Grade 6 standard progresses to establishing a context, introducing point of view, and organizing an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically. This progression shows that students are expected to write more organized and logically structured narratives as they advance.
Achievement Level Descriptors	

Developing	On Track	Advanced
Establish a context and introduce a narrator and/or character(s) and/or point of view. DOK: 2	**Engage and orient the reader by** establishing a context and introducing a narrator and/or character(s) **and** point of view; **organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.** DOK: 2–3	Engage and orient the reader by creating a **sophisticated** context and introducing a narrator and/or character(s) and point of view; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically. DOK: 2–3
	Possible Item Approaches	
Students will establish a context and/or introduce a narrator or character(s) and/or point of view. • Stems can ask students to identify which sentence could be added to a provided stimulus to establish a context or introduce a narrator or character(s) or point of view. For example, students read the following excerpt from a story: "Emma was eleven years old and in the sixth grade. She and her friends loved exploring the woods behind their school. One day, they found an old treehouse. 'This would make a great secret hideout!' said Emma. They realized that the treehouse was home to a family of squirrels." Then the question might ask, "Which sentence could be added next to introduce Emma's feelings about the squirrels in the treehouse?" The correct answer would describe Emma's thoughts, feelings, words, or actions, while incorrect answers would continue the story in some other way. • This standard can also be assessed with constructed response items, where students produce a sentence to add to a given writing sample. For example, "Write a sentence that could go in the blank to introduce the character of Emma."	Students will engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and/or introducing a narrator or character(s), and/or point of view; or students will organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically. • Stems can ask students to identify a replacement sentence for a provided stimulus, focusing on the sentence that would best engage and orient the reader by establishing a context or introducing a narrator, character(s), or point of view. Alternatively, stems can ask for a sentence to add to the stimulus that would best organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically. For example, students read the following excerpt from a story: "Emma was eleven years old and in the sixth grade. She and her friends loved exploring the woods behind their school. One day, they found an old treehouse. _____." The question would ask, "Which sentence should be added to the story to show the events that are likely to follow?" The correct answer is the sentence that clearly hints at the events to follow, such as, "The treehouse looked like it hadn't been used in years, and it definitely needed work, but it could be just what Emma had been hoping for." The distractors would give a sense of closure to the story, restate the situation, or be so vague that they fail to hint at any future events. • This standard can also be assessed with constructed response items, where students produce 1–2 sentences to add to a given writing sample. For example, "Add 1–2 new sentences to the story that show the events that are likely to follow."	Students will engage and orient the reader by creating a sophisticated context and/or introducing a narrator or character(s) and/or point of view; or students will organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically. • Stems can be similar to the item approach for On Track that requires students to add a new sentence to a provided stimulus. However, the correct answer for Advanced items needs to be the one that provides the most sophisticated context for the story—either through a more detailed explanation of the problem, a more detailed description of the narrator/character(s), or a more nuanced point of view—or that hints at a sequence of events that will unfold naturally and logically. For example, a correct answer for the sequence of events might be: "The squirrels were protective of their home and made it clear that reclaiming the treehouse wouldn't be easy." By adding this sentence to the story, readers can expect that some kind of battle between the friends and the family of squirrels will ensue. On the other hand, the distractors should be sentences that are clearly related to the story but lack the sophistication or organization of the correct answers. • This standard can also be assessed with constructed response items, where students produce 1–2 sentences to add to a given writing sample. For example, "Add 2-3 new sentences to the story to show what Emma would most likely do next."

LA.6.W.3.b

Content Strand	Writing
Anchor Standard	Modes of Writing Write in a variety of modes for a variety of purposes and audiences across disciplines.
Standard	LA.6.W.3 Write in a variety of literary forms to convey real or imagined experiences or events in which the development and structure are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience.
Indicator	LA.6.W.3.b Use literary techniques (e.g., dialogue, pacing, description) to develop characters, events, settings, and conflicts.
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.W.3.b asks students to: • Use literary techniques (e.g., **dialogue**, **pacing**, **description**) to develop characters, events, settings, and/or conflicts. The intent of this standard is for students to use various literary techniques in narrative writing. Writers use these techniques to make the characters, events, settings, and conflicts in their narratives more vivid and exciting. **Dialogue** is the conversation between characters in a story. It helps to reveal their personalities, thoughts, and feelings. For example, "Cecilia whispered, 'I think we should take the hidden path,' while Jorge replied, 'Are you sure it will take us back to grandfather's house?'" **Pacing** is the speed at which a story unfolds. It can create suspense, excitement, or a sense of calm. For example, "As the clock ticked down, their hearts raced faster and faster, knowing they had only minutes left to escape." **Description** is the use of detailed language to create vivid images in the reader's mind. It helps to bring the story's settings, characters, and events to life. For example, "The old house stood at the end of the street, its windows cracked and its paint peeling, surrounded by overgrown weeds and a rusty gate."
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard (LA.5.W.3.b) focuses on using dialogue and description to convey thoughts, feelings, experiences, and events in narrative writing. The Grade 6 standard progresses to the use of literary techniques more broadly to develop characters, events, settings, and conflicts. These techniques include dialogue and description and add pacing to the list. This progression shows that students are expected to have a more sophisticated understanding of the techniques writers use to develop narratives.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**

Use basic literary techniques to develop characters, events, settings, and/or conflicts. DOK: 2	Use literary techniques (e.g., dialogue, pacing, description) to develop characters, events, settings, and conflicts. DOK: 2–3	Use advanced literary techniques (e.g., dialogue, pacing, description) to develop complex characters, events, settings, and conflicts. DOK: 3
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will use basic literary techniques such as dialogue and description to develop characters, events, settings, and/or conflicts. (Pacing should not be assessed since it is a more advanced technique.) • Stems can ask students to identify which description or line of dialogue would best help the reader understand a character, an event, the setting, or the main conflict in a story. The options can be descriptive sentences or examples of dialogue. • Alternatively, in a technology-enhanced item, students may be given two options to choose from for each blank, with the correct answer providing a more detailed description. For example, "Emma was eleven years old and in the sixth grade. She and her friends loved exploring _____ (by walking around on trails in / **the shadowy green pathways of**) the woods behind their school. One day, they found an old treehouse. 'This would make a great secret hideout!' said Emma. They realized that the treehouse was home to a family of _____ (**angrily chattering** / brown furry) squirrels. 'Let's see if we can find a way to move them,' said Emma's friend Alex. 'Then we can get this place cleaned up.'"	Students will use literary techniques such as dialogue, pacing, or description to develop characters, events, settings, and/or conflicts. • Stems can be similar to the item approaches for Developing, but the items should ask students to choose between more precise words, phrases, or sentences. For example, "Which sentence of dialogue should be added to the story to show how Emma feels about finding the treehouse?" The correct answer would be: "'I've always wanted a secret place that's just for us!' said Emma." All distractors should be related to the story, but they should be less precise (e.g., "I like this place," said Emma.) or not in keeping with the character or situation presented in the rest of the stimulus (e.g., "We should turn around and go back towards school," said Emma.).	Students will use advanced literary techniques to develop complex characters, events, settings, and/or conflicts. • Stems can be similar to the item approaches for On Track, but they should ask students to focus on adding to the complexity of characters, events, settings, or conflicts, and they should focus on using advanced literary techniques, such as pacing. For example, the stem for an item that assesses pacing might say: "Read these lines from a student's story. 'One day, Emma and her friends found an old treehouse. "This would make a great secret hideout!" said Emma. Then they realized that the treehouse was home to a family of squirrels.' How should the writer continue the story to show that events are happening quickly?" The correct answer should be the option that clearly shows this quick pacing, perhaps through a series of short sentences, such as "The squirrels chattered angrily. Emma shrieked. 'They're mad!' she cried." The distractors could be longer sentences that show action or reveal a character's thoughts but do not suggest a quick pace, such as, "The squirrels jumped from the treehouse onto the branches of a nearby tree" or "Emma had never seen a group of squirrels so upset by the sight of humans!"

LA.6.W.3.c

Content Strand	Writing
Anchor Standard	Modes of Writing Write in a variety of modes for a variety of purposes and audiences across disciplines.
Standard	LA.6.W.3 Write in a variety of literary forms to convey real or imagined experiences or events in which the development and structure are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience.
Indicator	LA.6.W.3.c Use a variety of transitional words and phrases to signal shifts from one character, time frame, or setting to another.
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.W.3.c asks students to: • Use a variety of **transitional words and/or phrases** to signal shifts from one character, time frame, or setting to another. The intent of this standard is for students to use varied **transitional words and phrases** to signal shifts between characters, events, and settings, making the narrative clearer and easier to understand. Common transitional words and phrases at this grade include: Meanwhile, Shortly after, Later on, In another part of, Back at, Elsewhere, In the distance, During this time, In the following moments, As for. Greater variety in words and phrases can be accomplished by making them more specific to the story (e.g., In another part of the castle; Back at the ranch; During this time, the two cats; As for Max).
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on using a variety of transitional words and phrases to organize a sequence of events that unfolds naturally. The Grade 6 standard shifts the focus of transitional devices from organizing a sequence of events to signaling shifts in characters, events, and settings, showing that students are expected to have a more nuanced understanding of how to connect ideas in narratives.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
Use basic transitional words and phrases to identify shifts from one character, time frame, or setting to another. DOK: 1	Use **a variety of** transitional words and phrases to **signal** shifts from one character, time frame, or setting to another. DOK: 1–2	Use a variety of **sophisticated** transitional words and phrases to signal **complex** shifts from one character, time frame, or setting to another. DOK: 2
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will use basic transitional words and/or phrases to identify shifts from one character, time frame, or setting to another. • Stems can ask students to identify which transitional word or phrase would show a shift in character, time frame, or setting. For example, students read the following sentences: "One day, Emma and her friends found an old treehouse. 'This would make a great secret hideout!' said Emma. _____ they realized that the treehouse was home to a family of squirrels." Then they are asked, "Which word or phrase best connects the two sentences in this story?" with the correct answer being "Soon," and the distractors being other transitional words that do not show a logical shift in time (e.g., Back at school, Earlier in the day, Elsewhere).	Students will use a variety of transitional words and/or phrases to signal shifts from one character, time frame, or setting to another. • Stems can be similar to the item approach for Developing, but items should ask students to choose between more precise transitional words/phrases to connect two sentences. For example, students read the following sentences: "One day, Emma and her friends found an old treehouse. 'This would make a great secret hideout!' said Emma. _____ they realized that the treehouse was home to a family of squirrels." Then they are asked, "Which word or phrase best connects the two sentences in the story?" with the correct answer being "Almost immediately," and the distractors being other transitional words that do not logically connect the sequence of events show a logical shift in time (e.g., After they got home, In an hour or two, Meanwhile).	Students will use a variety of sophisticated transitional words and phrases to signal complex shifts from one character, time frame, or setting to another. • Stems can be similar to the item approach for On Track, but items should ask students to choose between traditional vs. more sophisticated transitional words/phrases. Examples of more sophisticated transitional words and phrases could include: as a result, for instance, despite this, as if on cue, little did they know. • Also, items for the Advanced ALD may ask students to connect multiple sentences in a longer stimulus. For example, in a technology-enhanced item, students may be given two options to choose from for each blank, with the correct answer being the better transitional word or phrase.

LA.6.W.3.d

Content Strand	Writing
Anchor Standard	Modes of Writing Write in a variety of modes for a variety of purposes and audiences across disciplines.
Standard	LA.6.W.3 Write in a variety of literary forms to convey real or imagined experiences or events in which the development and structure are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience.
Indicator	LA.6.W.3.d Use precise words and phrases, descriptive/sensory details, and figurative language to express personal or narrative voice.
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.W.3.d asks students to do one or more of the following: • Use **precise words and phrases** to express personal or narrative voice; or • Use **descriptive/sensory details** to express personal or narrative voice; or • Use **figurative language** to express **personal or narrative voice**. **Precise words and phrases** in narrative writing are specific and clear words that help provide detailed and accurate descriptions. **Descriptive details** are words that help paint a picture of the story in the reader's mind. Together, they help make the writing more vivid by providing exact details (e.g., "The sparkling, crystal-clear lake") rather than vague descriptions (e.g., "The nice lake"). **Sensory details** are descriptions that appeal to the five senses (sight, sound, smell, taste, touch). They help the reader experience the story more vividly. For example, "The soft, fluffy blanket felt like a cloud against my skin." **Figurative language** refers to words and expressions that are different from their literal meanings and are used to create a special effect or feeling in writing. "The wind whispered through the trees," is an example of personification, which could be used to make the setting feel spooky or suggest that something strange is about to happen in the story. **Personal or narrative voice** refers to the unique style and perspective that an author or narrator brings to a story. It encompasses the tone, diction, and personality conveyed through the writing, and it helps to engage the reader and make the story more relatable and memorable. It's what makes an author's writing unique and recognizable.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard (LA.5.W.3.b) focuses on using precise words and phrases, descriptive/sensory details, dialogue, and sensory language to convey thoughts, feelings, experiences, and events in narrative writing. The Grade 6 standard progresses to include figurative language, and it shifts the focus of this descriptive language from conveying thoughts, feelings, experiences, and events to expressing personal or narrative voice. This reflects a slightly more sophisticated understanding of narrative writing.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
Use some words and/or phrases, descriptive/sensory details, and/or figurative language to express personal or narrative voice. DOK: 1–2	**Use precise** words and phrases, descriptive/sensory details, and figurative language to express personal or narrative voice. DOK: 1–2	**Skillfully use** precise words and phrases, descriptive/sensory details, and figurative language to express **sophisticated** personal or narrative voice. DOK: 2
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will use some words/phrases, descriptive/sensory details, and/or figurative language to express personal or narrative voice. • Stems can ask students to identify which word/phrase, descriptive/sensory detail, or piece of figurative language would best expresse the personal or narrative voice in the story. For example, "Which phrase would go in the blank to best express the narrator's voice in the story." In a technology-enhanced item, students may be given two options to choose from for each blank in a provided stimulus. For example, "Emma was eleven years old and in the sixth grade. She and her friends loved _____ (**striking out like explorers** / taking daily walks) in the woods behind their school. One day, to their amazement, they found a run-down and abandoned treehouse. 'This would make a great _____ (place to play games! / **secret hideout!**)' said Emma.	Students will use precise words/phrases, descriptive/sensory details, and/or figurative language to express personal or narrative voice. • Stems can be similar to the item approach for Developing, but the items should ask students to choose between more precise words, phrases, sentences, or figurative language to express personal or narrative voice. For example, "Emma, an adventurous eleven-year-old, loved exploring with her friends. When they discovered an abandoned treehouse in the woods near her school, Emma was thrilled. 'This would make a great secret hideout!' she said. They realized that the treehouse was home to a family of angry squirrels, _____ (as fluffy as little brown clouds / **darting around like tiny balls of fury**). Emma was _____ (**astonished but determined** / not sure what to do). 'Let's see if we can find a way to move them,' said Emma's friend Alex."	Students will skillfully use precise words, phrases, descriptive/sensory details, and/or figurative language to express sophisticated personal or narrative voice. • Stems can be similar to the item approach for On Track, but they should ask students to focus on the skillful use of language to express a sophisticated personal or narrative voice. Correct answers could use creative, unusual, or especially precise figurative or descriptive language, while incorrect answers would be more common, general, or trite phrases. For example, "Read these sentences from a student's story. '"Emma, an adventurous eleven-year-old, and her friends loved exploring the woods behind their school. When they discovered an abandoned treehouse on a newly discovered path, Emma was thrilled. _____. 'This would make a great secret hideout!' said Emma.' Which sentence should be added to the story because it best expresses the narrator's voice?" The correct answer could be, "The treehouse, covered in ivy, looked as old as the giant tree that held it." The distractors would be less creative or precise examples of narrative voice, such as, "The treehouse was high up at the very top of the tree, like a cloud in the sky."

LA.6.W.3.e

Content Strand	Writing
Anchor Standard	Modes of Writing Write in a variety of modes for a variety of purposes and audiences across disciplines.
Standard	LA.6.W.3 Write in a variety of literary forms to convey real or imagined experiences or events in which the development and structure are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience.
Indicator	LA.6.W.3.e Provide a conclusion that is clearly related to and appropriately reflects on the literary experiences or events.
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.W.3.e asks students to: • Provide a **conclusion** that is clearly related to and appropriately reflects on the **literary experiences or events.** A **conclusion** is the end of a piece of writing and should provide the reader with a sense of closure. In narrative writing, the **literary experiences or events** are the central moments that the story focuses on. These experiences or events are often the most exciting, emotional, or significant part of the narrative, and they are what drives the plot forward. For example, it might be an adventure, a challenge, a discovery, or any other meaningful experience or event the characters encounter. An effective conclusion to a narrative is clearly related to and appropriately reflects on these central experiences or events. This reflection often involves the main character reflecting on their experiences, lessons learned, or changes they've undergone, providing a resolution while also inviting the reader to think deeply about the events and themes presented and consider the broader implications of the story. For items that assess this standard, the correct answer should be the option that best concludes the piece of writing. The distractors should be wrong because they fail to conclude the narrative skillfully, not because they are off-topic.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard (LA.5.W.3.d) focuses on providing a conclusion related to the creative or expressive event or experience. The Grade 6 standard progresses to providing a conclusion that is clearly related to and appropriately reflects on the literary experiences or events, showing that students need a deeper understanding of narrative writing to produce more effective conclusions.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
Provide a brief conclusion that is related to **and/or** appropriately reflects on the experiences or events. DOK: 2	Provide **a conclusion** that is **clearly** related to **and** appropriately reflects on the **literary** experiences or events. DOK: 2–3	Provide **an authentic and well-developed** conclusion that is clearly related to and appropriately reflects on the literary experiences or events. DOK: 3
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will provide a brief conclusion that is related to and/or appropriately reflects on the experiences or events. • Stems can provide students with a short stimulus consisting of 3–4 sentences that describe an event or experience. In a Multiple-Choice item with four options, students will be asked, "Which sentence would make the best ending for the story?" For Developing, the answer options should be brief in nature, such as "Emma and her friends decided to make a new home for the squirrels." The correct answer must be related to the experiences or events in the story, as well as provide a sense of closure, but it does not need to be reflective. This standard can also be assessed with constructed response items, where students produce a sentence to add to a given writing sample. For example, "Write a sentence that would make a strong ending for the story."	Students will provide a conclusion that is clearly related to and appropriately reflects on the literary experiences or events. • Stems can follow the approach for Developing, but the answer options for the item should be more sophisticated than the brief ones used for Developing. In addition, the correct answer should be the one that appropriately reflects on the literary experiences or events. This reflection might refer to a theme or lesson learned; it should provide a resolution and a sense of closure but also leave the reader with a parting thought. For example, "As they built a new home for the squirrels, Emma was happy that both she and her furry friends would soon have a special place to call their own." This standard can also be assessed with constructed response items, where students produce 1–2 sentences to add to a given writing sample. For example, "Write 1–2 sentences that would make a strong ending for the story."	Students will provide an authentic and well-developed conclusion that is clearly related to and appropriately reflects on the literary experiences or events. • Stems can be similar to the item approach for On Track, but the correct answer should be the conclusion that provides the best and most satisfying end to the narrative because it is both reflective and well developed. To accomplish this, the answer options may need to be more than one sentence. For example, "At that moment, Emma realized that she and the squirrels had a lot in common. They both cherished the importance of having a safe and cozy home and were willing to make sacrifices to protect it." The "authentic" piece of this ALD is best assessed through constructed response items, where students produce 2-3 sentences to add to a given writing sample. For example, "Write 2-3 sentences that give the story a strong ending and show what lesson the main character learned."

LA.6.W.4.a

Content Strand	Writing
Anchor Standard	Modes of Writing Write in a variety of modes for a variety of purposes and audiences across disciplines.
Standard	LA.6.W.4 Write arguments that explain a perspective with supporting reasons and evidence.
Indicator	LA.6.W.4.a Introduce a claim clearly and develop a structure in which the ideas are grouped logically.
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.W.4.a asks students to: • Introduce a **claim** clearly; and/or • Develop a **structure** in which ideas are grouped logically. The introduction sets the stage for the rest of the argument by providing context for the reader. First, the writer must introduce a claim clearly. A **claim** is the writer's primary argument, which is developed through supporting evidence. Next, the writer must develop a **structure**, or organizational plan, in which ideas are grouped logically. If the claim is that all students can benefit from playing a sport, regardless of their skill level, then each paragraph might focus on a reason that supports the argument. For example, the writer might say that playing a sport improves physical health, enhances social skills, and boosts academic performance. For items that assess this standard, the correct answer should be the option that best introduces a claim or develops a structure. The distractors should be wrong because they fail to introduce a claim or develop a structure skillfully, not because they are off-topic.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on introducing a topic or text clearly, stating an opinion or perspective, and developing a structure in which ideas are grouped logically. The Grade 6 standard is nearly the same but uses the term claim to encompass the topic, opinion, and perspective. This shift in terminology reflects a broader transition for students in Grade 6 from opinion writing to argumentative writing.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
Introduce a claim and/or develop a structure. DOK: 2	Introduce a claim clearly and develop a structure **in which the ideas are grouped logically**. DOK: 2	Introduce a claim clearly and develop a **sophisticated** structure in which the **most relevant** ideas are grouped logically. DOK: 2
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will introduce a claim and/or develop a structure in argumentative writing. • Stems should provide students with a short stimulus consisting of 3–4 sentences that begin to develop the topic. Then students can be asked to select which sentence, if added to the paragraph, would best introduce the claim. • Stems can also ask students to select a sentence that would continue the structure the author started in the provided stimulus (e.g., cause-effect, problem-solution). This standard can also be assessed with constructed response items, where students produce 1–2 sentences to add to a given writing sample. For example, "Write a sentence that would state a claim about the topic at the beginning of the passage."	Students will introduce a claim and develop a structure in which ideas are grouped logically in argumentative writing. • Stems that assess introducing a claim can be similar to the item approaches for Developing, but the correct answer should clearly state what the claim will focus on (Part A) and the question would have a second part (Part B) that asks students which of four provided sentences would best follow the correct answer to Part A because it best develops a structure in which ideas are grouped logically. This standard can also be assessed with constructed response items, where students produce 1–2 sentences to add to a given writing sample. For example, "Write 1 sentence that would introduce the claim and 1 sentence that would logically follow it."	Students will introduce a claim clearly and develop a sophisticated structure in which the most relevant ideas are grouped logically in argumentative writing. • Part A and B stems can be similar to the item approach for On Track. However, the correct answer for Part B should be the option that has the most sophisticated structure and/or prioritizes relevant ideas over less relevant ones (e.g., most important to least important reasons). For example, in Part B, students might be asked which of four sentences would best follow this claim, "There are many reasons why people are choosing to spend more time outdoors." The correct answer would be, "The most popular reason is that being outdoors allows us to be more active." This standard can also be assessed with constructed response items, where students produce 1–2 sentences to add to a given writing sample. For example, "Write 2 sentences that could be used to help the author develop their idea with reasons or evidence."

LA.6.W.4.b

Content Strand	Writing
Anchor Standard	Modes of Writing Write in a variety of modes for a variety of purposes and audiences across disciplines.
Standard	LA.6.W.4 Write arguments that explain a perspective with supporting reasons and evidence.
Indicator	LA.6.W.4.b Use relevant evidence from two or more credible sources.
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.W.4.b asks students to: -Use **relevant evidence** from two or more **credible sources** in argumentative writing. **Relevant evidence** may include facts and details that support the writer's argument, therefore making it more convincing and credible. Facts are objective evidence that can be used to support claim(s). For example, "According to the American Heart Association, regular physical activity can improve mood, boost energy levels, and enhance overall well-being." This fact can be used to support the argument that all students can benefit from playing a sport, regardless of their skill level. **Details** are specific examples, descriptions, or explanations that help support or illustrate the points being made. For example, "A study conducted by the National Institute of Health found that students who participated in team sports reported higher levels of self-esteem and better social skills." This description can be used to support the same argument. **Credible sources** are trustworthy and reliable places where students can find accurate information. These sources are often written by experts in the field and are published by reputable organizations (e.g., the American Heart Association, the National Institute of Health). Using information from credible sources strengthens the writer's argument because readers can trust that the information is accurate and well-researched.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on using facts and details to support reasons and/or evidence in opinion writing. The Grade 6 standard progresses to using relevant evidence from two or more credible sources, showing that students are expected to do research and evaluate source materials to support their arguments. This shift in focus reflects a broader transition for students in Grade 6 from opinion writing to argumentative writing.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
Use evidence from one or more sources. DOK: 1	Use **relevant** evidence from **two** or more **credible** sources. DOK: 2–3	**Skillfully** use **the most** relevant evidence from two or more credible sources. DOK: 3
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will use evidence from one or more sources in argumentative writing. • Stems can ask students to identify which source would likely provide the best evidence to support a given piece of argumentative writing. The options in this Multiple-Choice or Multi-select item would be several potential sources that may or may not offer credible evidence for the topic. For example, "Which source would most likely contain information that could be used as evidence to support the paragraph?" The options would be: "a blog from a company that takes care of lawns," "a flyer advertising an upcoming community race for a cause," "a newspaper article about the materials used for a new playground in the area," "a book about the impact of nature on our health," (correct answer). • Alternately, stems can ask students to identify the most relevant evidence to support a given argument. Answer options would be simulated quotes identified as being from the same or different sources. Distractors would be somewhat related in topic but not relevant to the argument described in the stem.	Students will use relevant evidence from two or more credible sources in argumentative writing. • Stems can be similar to the item approach for Developing. However, must ask for two or more pieces of relevant evidence from credible sources. For example, "Aaliyah is writing an article for the school website to convince readers to spend more time outdoors. Which two trustworthy sources would most likely provide the strongest evidence for her article?" The options would be similar to those for Developing, but they should include both credible and non-credible sources and relevant and non-relevant evidence. Also, these Multi-select items must have a second correct answer, such as, "a health magazine published right before summer months."	Students will use the most relevant evidence from two or more credible sources in argumentative writing. • Stems can be similar to the item approach for On Track, but the correct answers should be the most relevant evidence from credible sources. For example, "Which two pieces of evidence would be best to include in a piece of writing meant to convince readers to spend more time outside?" All options in this Multi-select item would be related to the topic at hand, though from different sources (some credible and others not). The correct answers would be the two pieces of evidence that clearly stand out as being the most relevant and are also from credible sources.

LA.6.W.4.c

Content Strand	Writing
Anchor Standard	Modes of Writing Write in a variety of modes for a variety of purposes and audiences across disciplines.
Standard	LA.6.W.4 Write arguments that explain a perspective with supporting reasons and evidence.
Indicator	LA.6.W.4.c Use words, phrases, and key vocabulary to clarify the relationship between claim(s) and supporting evidence.
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.W.4.c asks students to: • Use **words**, **phrases,** and/or **key vocabulary** to clarify the relationship between claim(s) and supporting evidence. The intent of this standard is for students to use specific words and phrases to clarify the relationship between claim(s) and supporting evidence in argumentative writing. Writers use transitional **words and phrases** to create clear and logical connections between ideas, such as between their claims and supporting evidence. Common transitional words and phrases at this grade might include: • To add information: additionally, furthermore, besides • To show cause and effect: because, therefore, as a result • To compare and contrast: similarly, however, yet • To sequence ideas: first, meanwhile, later • To give examples: including, for example, to illustrate • To conclude: finally, in conclusion, to sum up Writers also use **key vocabulary**, or important words and terms that are specific to a topic, to help convey precise meanings. A student writing about how all students can benefit from playing a sport might use vocabulary like cooperation, endurance, resilience, integrity, etc. Items that assess this standard should ask students to make writerly decisions in the context of writing. This item should focus only on words, phrases, and key vocabulary.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on using words, phrases, and key vocabulary to connect ideas in opinion writing. The Grade 6 standard is nearly the same but asks students to use words, phrases, and key vocabulary to clarify the relationship between claim(s) and supporting evidence. This progression, and change in terminology, reflects a broader transition for students in Grade 6 from opinion writing to argumentative writing.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
Use words, phrases, and/or key vocabulary to make connections between claim(s) and supporting evidence. DOK: 1–2	Use words, phrases, and key vocabulary **to clarify the relationship between** claim(s) and supporting evidence. DOK: 1–2	Use **sophisticated** words, phrases, and key vocabulary to clarify the relationship between claim(s) and supporting evidence. DOK: 1–2
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will use words, phrases, and/or key vocabulary to make connections between claims and supporting evidence in argumentative writing. • Stems can ask students to select the word, phrase, or key vocabulary that best connects a claim with its supporting evidence. Students may be provided with a 3–4 sentence stimulus, but this standard can also be approached using a shorter stimulus. For example: "Being outdoors is good for your health. _____, spending time outdoors can make you feel happier and more relaxed." Students would then be asked, "Which word or phrase best connects the ideas in the sentences?" The options would be: However, On the other hand, For example, (correct answer), and Nevertheless.	Students will use words, phrases, and key vocabulary to clarify the relationship between claim(s) and supporting evidence in argumentative writing. • Stems can ask students to select the word, phrase, or key vocabulary that best connects a claim with its supporting evidence. Students may be provided with a 3–4 sentence stimulus, but this standard can also be approached using a shorter stimulus. For example, "Being outdoors is good for your health. _____, playing outside can make you feel happier and more energetic." Students would then be asked, "Which word or phrase best connects the ideas in the sentences?" The correct answer would be "In fact," to show that the first sentence is the claim and the second then offers clarifying evidence.	Students will use sophisticated words, phrases, and key vocabulary to clarify the relationship between claim(s) and supporting evidence in argumentative writing. • Stems can ask students to select the word, phrase, or key vocabulary that best connects a claim with its supporting evidence. For Advanced, the connections should be more sophisticated than for On Track. Students may be provided with a 3–4 sentence stimulus, but this standard can also be approached using a shorter stimulus. For example, "Being outdoors is good for your health. _____ fresh air and sunshine can make you feel happier and more energetic." Students would then be asked, "Which word or phrase best connects the ideas in the sentences?" The correct answer would be "This is due to the fact that," to show that the first sentence is the claim and the second then offers clarifying evidence.

LA.6.W.4.d

Content Strand	Writing
Anchor Standard	Modes of Writing Write in a variety of modes for a variety of purposes and audiences across disciplines.
Standard	LA.6.W.4 Write arguments that explain a perspective with supporting reasons and evidence.
Indicator	LA.6.W.4.d Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.W.4.d asks students to: • Provide a **concluding statement** that follows from the argument presented; or • Provide a **concluding section** that follows from the **argument** presented. A **concluding statement** is a single sentence that ends a piece of writing. A **concluding section** is a longer end to a piece of writing, which builds over multiple sentences. The **argument presented** is the main point or claim that the writer is trying to prove, supported by reasons and evidence. The intent of this standard is for students to write effective conclusions in argumentative writing. An effective conclusion is one that is clearly connected to and follows from the argument presented. This might be accomplished by summarizing, reinforcing, or reflecting on the key points (i.e., reasons and evidence) that support the argument.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on providing a concluding statement or section related to the perspective. The Grade 6 standard progresses to providing a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented. This reflects a broader transition for students in Grade 6 from opinion writing to argumentative writing.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**

Provide a brief concluding statement or section. DOK: 2	Provide a concluding statement or section **that follows from the argument presented**. DOK: 2–3	Provide a **sophisticated** concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented. DOK: 3
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will provide a brief concluding statement or section in argumentative writing. • Stems can ask students to select a concluding sentence or section for a stimulus that expresses an argument. Stems should provide students with a short stimulus consisting of 3–4 sentences that develop a position. In a Multiple-Choice item with four options, students will be asked, "Which sentence would be the best conclusion for the writer's argument?" Answer options at this level should be brief, though generally related to the writer's argument. The correct answer should provide a sense of closure but should be a general statement rather than a reflective conclusion. For example, a correct answer might be, "This is why spending more time outside is a great idea." The distractors should be related to the topic but not the argument, such as, "Being inside is just boring!" This standard can also be assessed with constructed response items, where students produce a sentence to add to a given writing sample. For example, "Write a concluding sentence for the argument."	Students will provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented in argumentative writing. • Stems can be similar to the item approach for Developing, but the correct answer should be related to the writer's argument. Also, the stimulus and answer options should be more sophisticated at this level than at the Developing ALD. One approach might be for the final sentence of the stimulus to have a blank that students must complete with the best conclusion. For example, "By spending more time outdoors, _____." The options could be: you will spend more time with friends; there will be less time to watch TV; your parents will be pleased to see you reduce your screentime; overall quality of life should improve (correct answer). This standard can also be assessed with constructed response items, where students produce 1–2 sentences to add to a given writing sample. For example, "Write 2 sentences that would make a strong conclusion for the argument."	Students will provide a sophisticated concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented in argumentative writing. • Stems can be similar to the item approach for On Track, but the stimulus and answer options should be more sophisticated than those in the other ALDs, and the conclusions may be more than one (1) sentence. For example, "Spending more time outside has many benefits for our health and well-being. It helps us feel more relaxed, and it can improve physical fitness. Additionally, being outdoors allows us to connect with nature and enjoy some fresh air. _____." The best conclusion for this stimulus might be: "Therefore, making time to be outside is important for a balanced and healthy lifestyle." This standard can also be assessed with constructed response items, where students produce 1–2 sentences to add to a given writing sample. For example, "Write a two-sentence conclusion that summarizes the author's argument."

LA.6.W.5.a

Content Strand	Writing
Anchor Standard	Modes of Writing Write in a variety of modes for a variety of purposes and audiences across disciplines.
Standard	LA.6.W.5 Write informative/explanatory pieces to examine a topic or text and clearly convey ideas and information.
Indicator	LA.6.W.5.a Introduce a topic clearly and provide a general focus, grouping information logically and including text features, illustrations, and/or multimedia elements.
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.W.5.a asks students to: • Introduce a **topic** clearly; and/or • Provide a **general focus**, grouping information logically and including text features, illustrations, and/or multimedia elements. The intent of this standard is for students to be able to write a strong introduction that sets the stage for a well-organized piece of writing. A **topic** is the subject or main idea of a piece of writing, while a **general focus** provides a structure that guides the content and direction of the writing. For example, a general focus for an explanatory piece might be that there are many benefits to playing a musical instrument. The structure of the writing would group information logically around each benefit (getting smarter, feeling happier, making friends) to present ideas clearly. Text features, illustrations, and multimedia elements would be included in this structure since they help organize, highlight, and present important information, often in a visual format. For items that assess this standard, the correct answer should be the strongest introduction. The distractors should be wrong because they fail to introduce the writing skillfully, not because they are off-topic.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on introducing a topic clearly and providing a general focus, which includes grouping information logically and including text features, illustrations, and/or multimedia elements. The Grade 6 standard is identical, showing that students need another year to work on these writing skills.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
Introduce a topic and group related information together. DOK: 2	Introduce a topic **clearly and provide a general focus, grouping information logically and including text features, illustrations, and/or multimedia elements.** DOK: 2	Introduce a topic clearly and provide a general focus, grouping information logically and including **advanced** text features, illustrations, and/or multimedia elements. DOK: 2
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will introduce a topic and/or will group related information together in informative/explanatory writing. • Stems can provide a writing scenario and stimulus missing an introductory statement and then ask students to identify which sentence would best introduce the topic. • Stems may also provide a short stimulus related to the topic and provide a blank where students have an opportunity to group related information together. All options would be about the topic, with the correct answer being the one most clearly related to the information in the adjacent sentence(s). For example, students might be presented with a short stimulus passage about the damage done by the 1980 eruption of Mount Saint Helens. The stem would ask students to group related information by identifying another sentence that belongs in the paragraph. The key would be a sentence also related to the damage done by the eruption, while	Students will introduce a topic clearly and/or provide a general focus, grouping information logically and including text features, illustrations, and/or multimedia elements in informative/explanatory writing. • Stems that assess introducing a topic can be similar to the item approach for Developing, but the items for On Track should have a Part B that asks students to identify a second sentence that provides a general focus for the writing or a text feature that could be used to build on the introductory sentence. For example, Part A might explain that a student is writing an online informational report about Mount St. Helens and ask students to select the best introductory sentence, with the correct answer being "Mount St. Helens is a volcano in Washington state that erupted in 1980, causing widespread damage." The stem for Part B would then ask, "Which sentence should come next to provide a general focus for the report?"	Students will introduce a topic clearly and provide a general focus, grouping information logically and including advanced text features, illustrations, and/or multimedia elements in informative/explanatory writing. • Stems can be similar to the item approaches for On Track, but the stimulus and answer options should be more sophisticated. Also, the text features, illustrations, and multimedia elements described in the answer options should be more advanced, such as inline quotations, sidebars, table of contents, glossaries, timelines, infographics, diagrams, videos, audio clips, slideshows, etc. • This standard can also be assessed with constructed response items, where students produce a few sentences to add to a given writing sample. For example, "Write 2-3 sentences that could come next to set up a clear focus and organizational structure of the essay."

the incorrect answers would be related to Mount St. Helens in some other way. For example, incorrect responses might be sentences related to historical eruptions of Mount St. Helens or about the varieties of wildlife living in the vicinity.

• Alternatively, technology-enhanced items might present students with facts about Mount St. Helens which they would move into a clearly labeled chart to group them appropriately. Headings on the chart could read "Damage Done" and "Healing" with options related to each topic. This approach would include a stem that introduces a writing scenario.

• This standard can also be assessed with constructed response items, where students produce 1–2 sentences to add to a given writing sample. For example, "Write a sentence that could go in the blank to introduce the topic of the essay."

with the correct answer being, "Since then, the area has made an impressive recovery in the return of wildlife and its regrowth of plants, showing how nature can heal." Or Part B could ask which multimedia element would best follow the introductory sentence to build on the idea, with the correct answer being the one that best shows the widespread damage.

• For adding elements, stems could provide students with a short stimulus that introduces the topic and provides a general focus, such as those described above. Then students would be asked, "Which element should Jack add to the essay to best help readers understand the return of wildlife to the Mount St. Helens area?" The options could include: a chart showing the number of deer in the region since 1950 (correct answer), a map of the largest active volcanoes in the United States, a video of the eruption of Mount St. Helens in 1980, a photograph of a squirrel gathering nuts.

• This standard can also be assessed with constructed response items, where students produce 1–2 sentences to add to a given writing sample. For example, "Write 1-2 sentences that could go in the blank to introduce and provide the focus of the essay."

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LA.6.W.5.b

Content Strand	Writing
Anchor Standard	Modes of Writing Write in a variety of modes for a variety of purposes and audiences across disciplines.
Standard	LA.6.W.5 Write informative/explanatory pieces to examine a topic or text and clearly convey ideas and information.
Indicator	LA.6.W.5.b Develop a topic with information (e.g., facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, examples) related to the topic.
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.W.5.b asks students to both: • Provide or list information related to a topic; and • Develop a **topic** with information (e.g., facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, examples) related to the topic. A **topic** is the subject or main idea of a piece of writing. The intent of this standard is for students to develop their informative/explanatory writing with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, and examples that are related to the topic. This helps writers build knowledge about a topic and helps them focus their writing on the most relevant information. For items that assess this standard, the correct answer should be the option or options that best develop the topic with information related to the topic. The distractors should be wrong because they fail to do so skillfully, not because they are off-topic.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on developing the topic of a piece of informative or explanatory writing with information (e.g., facts, definitions, details, quotations) related to the topic. The Grade 6 standard is nearly identical, but it adds concrete details and examples as types of information. This shows that students are continuing to learn new strategies for developing the topic of their writing.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
Provide or list some information (e.g., facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, examples) **that is somewhat related to the topic.** DOK: 1	**Develop a topic with information** (e.g., facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, examples) **related to the topic.** DOK: 2	Develop a topic with **complex** information (e.g., facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, examples) **most clearly** related to the topic. DOK: 2
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will identify information (e.g., facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, examples) related to the topic of an informative/explanatory text. • Stems can ask students to identify which information could be included in a given informative article about a particular topic. The options item would include one fact, definition, concrete detail, quotation, and/or example that is relevant to the topic and three sentences that should not be included in the text, such as an opinion, unanswered question, unrelated topic, etc. A Multi-select item could include two correct answers that are relevant to the topic.	Students will develop a topic with information (e.g., facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, examples) related to the topic of an informative/explanatory text. • Stems can provide students with a writing scenario and short stimulus and then ask students to choose sentences or approaches that could be used to develop the topic, distinguishing between relevant and irrelevant information or approaches. For example, students could be asked, "What information should be included in an article about the significance of discovering ice on the Moon?" The options could be one fact, definition, concrete detail, quotation, and/or example and three irrelevant ones. Choices for On Track items should require more careful scrutiny than for Developing. Alternatively, a Multi-select item could include two correct answers.	Students will develop the topic with complex information (e.g., facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, examples) most clearly related to the topic of an informative/explanatory text. • Stems can ask students to choose from a provided list of complex information, selecting the 1–2 pieces of information most clearly related to the topic and thus the most important to include. This could be done with a technology-enhanced item that asks students to move the most clearly related information into a blank or blanks in a provided stimulus.

LA.6.W.5.c

Content Strand	Writing
Anchor Standard	Modes of Writing Write in a variety of modes for a variety of purposes and audiences across disciplines.
Standard	LA.6.W.5 Write informative/explanatory pieces to examine a topic or text and clearly convey ideas and information.
Indicator	LA.6.W.5.c Use appropriate transitions and key vocabulary to clarify relationships among ideas and concepts.
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.W.5.c asks students to: • Use **appropriate transitions** to clarify relationships among ideas and concepts; or • Use **key vocabulary** to clarify relationships among ideas and concepts. **Appropriate transitions** refer to words or phrases that guide the reader from one idea to the next, showing how the ideas are related. Words like "first," "next," and "finally" help show the order of events. Words and phrases like "because," "therefore," and "as a result" help show a cause-effect relationship. And phrases like "In other words," "That is to say," and "To put it another way" help show that an additional explanation will follow. For example, "Photosynthesis is how plants make food. <u>In other words</u>, it's their way of eating." **Key vocabulary** refers to important words or terms that are specific to a topic and help convey precise meanings. Both appropriate transitions and key vocabulary can be used to clarify relationships among ideas and concepts in informational or explanatory writing. Items that assess this standard should ask students to make writerly decisions in the context of writing and should focus only on appropriate transitions or key vocabulary.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on using linking words and phrases and key vocabulary to connect ideas and categories of information. The Grade 6 standard progresses to using appropriate transitions and key vocabulary to clarify relationships among ideas and concepts, which requires more precise use of transitional words and phrases specifically chosen to suit the purpose and tone of the writing.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
Use some transitions and/or vocabulary to make connections between ideas and concepts. DOK: 1	Use **appropriate transitions** and **key vocabulary to clarify relationships among** ideas and concepts. DOK: 1–2	Use **sophisticated transitions** and key vocabulary to clarify relationships among **complex** ideas and concepts. DOK: 2
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will use some transitions and/or vocabulary to make connections between ideas and concepts in an informative/explanatory text. • Stems can ask students to select the transition that best connects ideas and concepts. Students could be provided with a 3–4 sentence stimulus about an informational topic. For example, the last sentence in a short stimulus about photosynthesis might be: "Photosynthesis is important _____ it allows plants to produce food from sunlight." Then students would be asked, "Which word best connects the ideas in this sentence?" And the options would be: and, because (correct answer), if, therefore. • Alternatively, stems can ask students to use key vocabulary to connect ideas and concepts. For example, a similar stimulus about photosynthesis could end with this sentence: "During photosynthesis, plants turn sunlight into _____ and store it in the form of glucose." Again, the question would be, "Which word best connects the ideas in this sentence?" And the options would be: energy (correct answer), leaves, pictures, warmth.	Students will use appropriate transitions and/or key vocabulary to clarify relationships among ideas and concepts in an informative/explanatory text. • Stems that assess using appropriate transitions or key vocabulary can be similar to the item approaches for Developing, but the On Track items should focus on clarifying relationships among ideas and concepts. In addition, the items should include more advanced transitions and/or key vocabulary. Finally, students can be asked to complete multiple blanks, either in a Multiple-Choice format or through a technology-enhanced item. For example, a Hot Text item might look like this: "Photosynthesis is the _____ (name / **process**) by which plants make their own food using sunlight, water, and carbon dioxide. Plants use sunlight to turn water and carbon dioxide into glucose, a type of sugar that provides energy. _____ (**As a result** / In other words), oxygen is released into the air. The oxygen released during photosynthesis is essential for humans to breathe, _____ (however / **which is why**) being around plants is good for our health."	Students will use sophisticated transitions and key vocabulary to clarify relationships among complex ideas and concepts. • Stems can be similar to the item approaches for On Track, but the answer options should include more advanced transitions and/or key vocabulary, and the stimuli should include even more complex ideas and concepts.

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Content Strand	Writing
Anchor Standard	Modes of Writing Write in a variety of modes for a variety of purposes and audiences across disciplines.
Standard	LA.6.W.5 Write informative/explanatory pieces to examine a topic or text and clearly convey ideas and information.
Indicator	LA.6.W.5.d Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation(s).
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.W.5.d asks students to: • Provide a **concluding statement** that follows from the information or explanation(s); or • Provide a **concluding section** that follows from the information or explanation(s). A **concluding statement** is a single sentence that ends a piece of writing. A **concluding section** is a longer end to a piece of writing, which builds over multiple sentences. The intent of this standard is for students to write effective conclusions in informative/explanatory writing. An effective conclusion is one that naturally follows from the information or explanation(s) in the piece of writing and is clearly connected to the key ideas and/or purpose for writing. This can be accomplished through summarizing, reflecting on, or extending the information or explanation(s) presented. For items that assess this standard, the correct answer should be the option that best concludes the piece of writing. The distractors should be wrong because they fail to conclude the text skillfully, not because they are off-topic.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on providing a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation(s). The Grade 6 standard progresses to providing a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation(s), suggesting that the transition should be more natural, and students should be more skilled with effectively concluding a piece of informative or explanatory writing.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	On Track	Advanced

Provide a brief concluding statement or section. DOK: 2	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation(s). DOK: 2–3	Provide a sophisticated and authentic concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation(s). DOK: 2–3
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will provide a brief concluding statement or section in an informative/explanatory text. • Stems can ask students to select a concluding sentence for a stimulus that informs or explains. Stems should provide students with a short stimulus consisting of 3–4 sentences that develop the topic. In a Multiple-Choice item with four options, students will be asked, "Which sentence would be the best conclusion for the topic?" At this level, the correct answer does not need to be the option that follows from the information or explanation(s); it need only be a statement that provides some sense of closure. For example, a correct response could be, "Photosynthesis is important because it helps humans breathe and plants grow," while an incorrect option might be, "During photosynthesis, plants use sunlight to create and store sugar." This standard can also be assessed with constructed response items, where students produce a sentence to add to a given writing sample. For example, "Write a concluding sentence for the passage."	Students will provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation(s) in an informative/explanatory text. • Stems can be similar to the item approach for Developing, but the best concluding statement/section should be the one that most effectively follows from the information or explanation(s) in the 3–4 sentence stimulus provided in the stem. For example, a correct answer might be: "Photosynthesis is essential for life on Earth because it produces oxygen for us to breathe and food for plants to grow." This standard can also be assessed with constructed response items, where students produce 1–2 sentences to add to a given writing sample. For example, "Write 2 sentences that would make a strong conclusion for the passage."	Students will provide a sophisticated and authentic concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation(s) in an informative/explanatory text. • Stems can be similar to the item approach for On Track, but the correct answer should be the option that is the most sophisticated, meaning it reiterates the key ideas and/or encourages readers to think about the broader implications of the topic. For example, a correct answer might be: "The oxygen and food produced through photosynthesis are critical for all living things. Learning about this process encourages us to protect and preserve plant life for future generations." The "authentic" piece of this ALD is best assessed through constructed response items, where students produce 1–2 sentences to add to a given writing sample. For example, "Write a two-sentence conclusion for the passage that summarizes the main ideas and explains the importance of the topic."

LA.6.W.6.a

Content Strand	Writing
Anchor Standard	Modes of Writing Write in a variety of modes for a variety of purposes and audiences across disciplines.
Standard	LA.6.W.6 Gather and use credible evidence from trustworthy sources and assess its relevance in answering a research question.
Indicator	LA.6.W.6.a Paraphrase and quote evidence to support ideas while avoiding plagiarism.
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.W.6.a asks students to both: • **Paraphrase** and **quote** evidence from sources; and • Use paraphrased and quoted evidence **to support ideas** in writing. The intent of this standard is for students to learn how to paraphrase or quote evidence from sources, such as books, periodicals, reference materials, or online sources, so that they can integrate the evidence into their writing. Evidence refers to any details that students might use to support their ideas in writing. To **paraphrase** evidence means to take material from a source and put it in your own words while maintaining the original meaning. To **quote** evidence means to put an excerpt from the source material in quotation marks and properly credit the source. To use paraphrased and quoted evidence **to support ideas**, students must first evaluate how well the information supports their ideas and then integrate the information into their writing.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on paraphrasing information and evidence from sources to support ideas while avoiding plagiarism. The Grade 6 standard progresses to include quoting evidence, reflecting a more sophisticated understanding of the distinctions between paraphrasing and quoting and the appropriate ways to use each.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**

Paraphrase and/or quote evidence. DOK: 1	Paraphrase and quote evidence **to support ideas while avoiding plagiarism.** DOK: 2	**Consistently and skillfully** paraphrase and quote evidence to support ideas while avoiding plagiarism. DOK: 2
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will paraphrase and/or quote evidence. • Stems can ask students to identify which sentence correctly paraphrases information or evidence from a source. The item should present a short stimulus as the source. For example, "The Sandhills cover over one quarter of Nebraska and were created by wind-blown sand that built up over thousands of years, forming one of the largest dune fields in the Western Hemisphere." The stem would ask, "Which sentence provides the same information?" The correct answer would be, "The Sandhills, which are dunes formed over many years, now cover a large part of Nebraska." A plausible distractor would be, "The Sandhills are dunes that used to cover much more of Nebraska than they do today." This item approach demonstrates student understanding that paraphrasing involves changing the sentence in ways that stay true to the original information and meaning.	Students will paraphrase and/or quote evidence to support ideas while avoiding plagiarism. • Stems can ask students to identify which sentence, paraphrased from a source, should be used to support an idea in a draft piece of student writing. Similar to Developing, the item should present a short stimulus from a book or other source. It should also provide a draft piece of student writing with a blank to show where the paraphrased information from the source should go. For example: "Harper has written these sentences. 'The Sandhills, which are dunes formed over many years, now cover a large part of Nebraska. _____.' Based on the book, which sentence should Harper write next to support her idea?" The correct answer should be the sentence that is paraphrased and supports the idea. For example, "The Sandhills are the result of ancient rivers that left sand behind, which was later shaped by strong winds." The distractors should be copied word for word from the source and/or not support the idea in the writing. For example, "This area is home to many small ponds and lakes, which are supported by a large underground layer of water-bearing rock called an aquifer." • Alternatively, students can be asked which sentence best quotes evidence to support the idea with all options being a variation of the same sentence from the source, and the correct answer being the only one that quotes and credits the source. The distractors can be paraphrases and a quote that does not credit the source.	Students will consistently and skillfully paraphrase and/or quote evidence to support ideas while avoiding plagiarism. • Stems can be similar to the item approaches for On Track, but the items for Advanced should include more sophisticated stimuli, which will increase the challenge of determining which sentences best support the idea in the text. The sentences from the source material should also be more sophisticated and/or nuanced to increase the challenge of retaining meaning while avoiding plagiarism. Finally, to assess the "consistent" part of the ALD, items for Advanced should use a Multi-select format and ask students to select the two sentences that best support ideas in the stimulus while avoiding plagiarism.

LA.6.W.6.c

Content Strand	Writing
Anchor Standard	Modes of Writing Write in a variety of modes for a variety of purposes and audiences across disciplines.
Standard	LA.6.W.6 Gather and use credible evidence from trustworthy sources and assess its relevance in answering a research question.
Indicator	LA.6.W.6.c Select and use appropriate note-taking formats to collect and organize information.
Central Aspects to Be Measured	An item that fully measures LA.6.W.6.c asks students to: • Select and use appropriate **note-taking formats** to collect and organize information. The intent of this standard is for students to be able to gather information for their writing in a logical and systematic way. A **note-taking format** is a structured method for recording information, such as an outline, chart, or graphic organizer. These aids help writers be more effective in collecting and organizing information for their writing.
Progression from Previous Grade	The Grade 5 standard focuses on sorting evidence into categories using an appropriate note-taking format to collect and organize information. The Grade 6 standard progresses to selecting and using appropriate note-taking formats to collect and organize information, showing that students are expected to collect and organize information more thoughtfully, making informed choices about format.

Achievement Level Descriptors		
Developing	**On Track**	**Advanced**
Select and/or use note-taking formats to collect and/or organize information. DOK: 2	**Select and use appropriate** note-taking formats to collect and organize information. DOK: 2	**Select and use sophisticated** note-taking formats to collect and **logically** organize **complex** information. DOK: 2
Possible Item Approaches		
Students will select and/or use note-taking formats to collect and/or organize information. • Stems can ask students to select the best note-taking format for a given writing purpose. With this approach, note-taking formats should be clearly defined in either the stem or the answer choices. Then students would be asked, "Which note-taking format would be best for creating a presentation about how electricity reaches people's homes?" The correct answer would be, "a flow chart because it clearly shows steps in a process." • Alternatively, stems can ask students to fill in the blank in a partially completed note-taking format, such as a missing topic, subtopic, or detail in an outline. Note that this task focuses only on the organization part of the ALD, as the collecting information part is already done for students.	Students will select and use appropriate note-taking formats to collect and organize information. • Stems can be similar to the second item approach for Developing, but they should involve reading a short stimulus and then completing multiple blanks in a partially completed note-taking format (e.g., a flow chart of how a volcano forms and erupts). Using a Gap Match item type, students could be asked to move details from the toolbox to the blanks in the chart. This task would focus on the part of the ALD about using appropriate note-taking formats to organize information, as selecting the note-taking format and collecting the information has already been done for students.	Students will select and use sophisticated note-taking formats to collect and logically organize complex information. • Stems can be similar to the item approach for On Track. However, the note-taking formats used in Advanced items should be more sophisticated than in the other ALDs (e.g., chart, diagram, outline, timeline). Additionally, the toolbox should include details that will not be used in the provided note-taking format, so students must make decisions about how to logically organize complex information. For example, the stem area would provide a partially completed chart with columns for different categories of information about the Sandhills in Nebraska (e.g., geography, natural features, wildlife, human activities). Students would then be asked to complete the chart with the note(s) that most logically fit each category.