

6th Grade Introduction to & Analysis of Various Genres

A Three Week Unit

Week 1

Snapshot: Includes characteristics of adventure, fantasy, children's literature, historical fiction with accompanying online articles, science fiction, mystery

Week 2

Snapshot: Includes biographies, autobiographies, memoirs, informative & persuasive genres, speeches, opinion & editorial genres... A little more writing-intensive for students than Week One.

Week 3

Snapshot: Includes poetry & drama, myths, short story fiction, unit review & quiz (... and mini-lessons for each day, too!)

Why is this only a three-week unit?

6th graders are funny little people :) They're not quite secondary, but they're not really elementary anymore, either. Major gaps can still exist, so this unit is only three weeks long because it was only meant to serve as a way to begin the school year or as a way to provide intervention and support for those students who are still struggling with genres when reading and writing. This is a fantastic unit to use to help students understand that all reading and all writing are not the same, and good readers know how to approach each genre a little bit differently in order to comprehend the reading in the best way.

When would be a good time of the year for me to use this unit?

My favorite time of year to use this unit is during those first few weeks of school. It's not too heavy and involving for you OR for you students (so you can spend much-needed time enforcing and practicing school / classroom procedures). Plus, this unit ensures that all your students are beginning the year with the same foundation regardless of what they missed or excelled at in previous years. My second favorite time of the year for this unit is as a review towards the end of the year. I love that it provides an interactive summary of all the major genres you've taught. It's just a good way to finish out the school year and to send them on to 7th grade!

What would be a good unit to complete after this one?

If you have total freedom with what you can teach next, I would recommend moving into the Elements of Fiction / Short Story Unit since that would flow nicely after the last week of this genre unit. But really, it'll be 100% fine to move into any of the other 6th grade units because by now, students have a foundational level of working knowledge so they can make connections to new concepts!



6th Grade Elements of Fiction & Short Stories A Six Week Unit

Week 1

Snapshot: Plot diagram, elements of plot, setting analysis, videos to teach with

Week 2

Snapshot: Elements of characterization, conflict analysis, text evidence

Week 3

Snapshot: Theme vs. topic, short story analysis, making inferences, using text evidence

Week 4

Snapshot: Mood, tone, foreshadow, suspense, flashback, symbolism

Week 5

Snapshot: Elements of fiction writing project: plot, setting, characters, etc. (This is a two-week writing project that would make an awesome final assessment! That's how most people use it!)

Week 6

Snapshot: Elements of fiction writing project: dialogue, conflict, theme, etc. (This is where students finish the writing project. It does make for a good alternative assessment to close out the unit.)

6th Grade Elements of Plays & Drama A Four Week Unit

Week 1

Snapshot: Form & structure of a play, reading with tone, academic vocabulary

Week 2

Snapshot: Academic vocabulary, analysis of excerpts from plays, read/analyze class play

Week 3

Snapshot: Close reading analysis, write a scene, be creative

Week 4

Snapshot: Unit test, review activities, closing / end of unit lesson



6th Grade Elements of Poetry & Figurative Language

A Four Week Unit

Week 1

Snapshot: Figurative language analysis, introduction to analysis and close reading of poetry

Week 2

Snapshot: Author's purpose, theme, paired poetry passages, annotations, text evidence

Week 3

Snapshot: Analysis of figurative language and poetry, theme, devices, project

Week 4

Snapshot: It's the end of the unit, so we begin with two full days' worth of figurative language and poetry activities followed by review lessons (a few different options here) and two versions of a unit test. This is a full week! Really, you could even spread this week out into nearly two weeks (if you need to) or you could omit the first two days' worth of activities and move right into the review and test materials if you're crunched for time.

Do you want to stretch this unit even further into a full six weeks unit (or more)?

Check out first four weeks of the 7th grade Descriptive Unit in the Language Arts Teachers lesson plan area. Each of those weeks teaches poetry at a deeper level than what you've just covered with your sixth graders, so choose any of them to extend the poetry / figurative language unit here!



6th Grade Elements of Media Literacy & Persuasion

A Six Week Unit

Week 1

Snapshot: Claim, argument, emotional/logical appeal, irrelevant information

Week 2

Snapshot: Advertisements, generalizations, faulty reasoning, loaded language

Week 3

Snapshot: Compare/contrast & analyze various persuasive techniques in media and in text forms

Week 4

Snapshot: Online privacy, media usage, commercials & ads, etc.

Week 5

Snapshot: Persuasive language in excerpts from famous speeches

Week 6

Snapshot: End-of-unit review activities, two versions of unit test, etc.



6th Grade Informational Texts: Text Features & Text Structures

A Four Week Unit

Week 1

Snapshot: Introduction to text features & text structures. Close reading activities for nonfiction analysis centered around the compare / contrast organizational structure. What a great way to begin a deep-dive into reading, writing, and analyzing nonfiction texts!

Week 2

Snapshot: In-depth analysis, practice, and writing assignments centered around problem / solution and cause / effect text structures. Students will continue thinking and writing critically about why writers do what they do in nonfiction texts.

Week 3

Snapshot: In-depth analysis, practice, and writing assignments centered around description as an organizational text structure (even in nonfiction texts!) along with sequencing and chronological structures, too!

Week 4

Snapshot: Students will create an authentic, writing-rich pamphlet project centered around bringing this nonfiction unit to a close. The week starts with an engaging “brain dump” brainstorming activity and ends with a written pamphlet! Each day of the week will have students working through specific prewriting and writing activities that will guide them in the writing project using the text structures and text features they’ve learned about.

Do you want to stretch this unit even further into a full six weeks unit (or more)?

Check out any of the snapshots for the 7th grade Expository Unit in the Language Arts Teachers lesson plan area to extend the unit here if you need more materials, or if your students are really “getting it” and you want to push them a little more!

