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www.michigan.gov/mde



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A Parent's Guide to ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GRADE LEVEL CONTENT EXPECTATIONS

WHAT YOUR CHILD NEEDS
TO KNOW BY THE END OF

SIXTH GRADE



Welcome to Our School!

This school year promises to be an exciting time for your child, filled with learning, discovery, and growth. It is also a time to share a new guide the Michigan Department of Education has developed for you. *A Parent's Guide to Grade Level Content Expectations* outlines the types of literacy and mathematics skills students should know and be able to do at the end of each grade.

Please feel free to share this guide with your family and friends. Use it when you talk with your child's teacher. Ask what *you* can do to support learning in the classroom and reinforce learning at home. You can find more ideas and tools to help you stay involved in your child's education at www.michigan.gov/mde.

Your School Principal (Customize)

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A Parent's Guide to the Grade Level Content Expectations

Michigan Sets High Academic Standards – for ALL

This booklet is a part of Michigan's Mathematics and English Language Arts Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCE). It is just one in a series of tools available for schools and families. The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) provides similar booklets for families of children in kindergarten through eighth grade.

Teacher versions of the Grade Level Content Expectations are finished for grades Kindergarten through eight. They state in clear and measurable terms what students in each grade are expected to know and be able to do. They also guide the design of the state's grade level MEAP tests required in the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) legislation.

Educators and classroom teachers from Michigan school districts have been involved in the development and/or review of Michigan's GLCE. The expectations were designed to ensure that students receive seamless instruction, from one grade to the next, leaving no gaps in any child's education. More importantly, they set high expectations in literacy and mathematics so we can better prepare all K-12 students for the challenges they will face in a global 21st century.

To learn more about the Michigan Curriculum Framework, visit www.michigan.gov/mde and click on "K-12 Curriculum".

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Sixth Grade English Language Arts (ELA) develops strength in reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing skills. Your child should increase his/her ability to analyze and synthesize information, increase reading ability and become a more proficient writer.

Glossary Terms

Words that have asterisks (*) are defined in the Glossary section located in the back of this booklet.

By the end of the sixth grade, your child should be able to do the following:



READING

Word Study

- Use word structure, sentence structure, and prediction* to aid in decoding and understanding the meanings of words in context.
- Use structural*, syntactic*, and semantic* analysis to recognize unfamiliar words in context, such as origins and meanings of foreign words, words with multiple meanings, knowledge of major word chunks/rimes, syllabication.
- Automatically recognize frequently encountered words.
- Know the meaning of frequently encountered words in written and oral contexts.
- Apply strategies to construct meaning and identify unknown words.
- Fluently read sixth grade texts.
- Use strategies (example: connotation*, denotation*) to determine the meaning of words and phrases in context (example: regional idioms*, content area vocabulary, technical terms).

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Narrative Text

- Describe how characters in classic and contemporary literature recognized for quality and literary merit form opinions about one another in ways that can be fair and unfair.
- Analyze elements and style of narrative genres (example: folktales, fantasy, adventure, action).
- Analyze the role of dialogue*, plot*, characters, themes, major and minor characters, and climax*.
- Analyze how authors use dialogue, imagery*, and understatement* to develop plot.

Informational Text

- Analyze elements and style of informational genre (examples: research report, how-to-articles, essays).
- Analyze organizational patterns.
- Explain how authors use text features to enhance the understanding of central, key, and supporting ideas.

Examples:

- footnotes*
- bibliographies*
- introductions
- summaries
- conclusions
- appendices*



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Comprehension

- Connect personal knowledge, experience, and understanding of the world to themes and perspectives in the text.
- Read, retell and summarize grade level appropriate narrative and informational texts.
- State global themes, universal truths, and principles within and across texts to create a deeper understanding.
- Apply knowledge from what has been read in grade level appropriate science and social studies.

Metacognition

- Independently self-monitor comprehension when reading or listening to text by automatically using and discussing the strategies used to increase comprehension and engage in discussions.

Examples:

- predicting
 - questioning
 - inferring*
 - summarizing
 - constructing mental images representing ideas in text
 - rereading or listening again if uncertain about meaning
- Plan, monitor, regulate, and evaluate skills, strategies, and processes for their own reading comprehension by applying appropriate metacognitive skills.
(Examples: SQ3R*, pattern guides, process of reading guides)



Comprehension

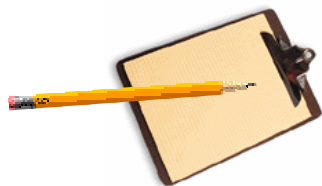
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Critical Standards

- Compare the appropriateness of shared, individual, and expert standards based on purpose, context, and audience in order to assess his/her own work and the work of others.

Reading Attitude

- Be enthusiastic about reading.

WRITING

Writing Genres

- Write a narrative piece such as a personal narrative, adventure story, tall tale, folk tale, or fantasy that includes elements of characterization for major and minor characters, internal and/or external conflict, and address issues of plot, theme*, and imagery.
- Write an essay such as a personal, persuasive*, or comparative* essay, for an audience that includes organizational patterns that support key ideas.
- Develop research questions using multiple resources and perspectives that allows him/her to organize, analyze, and explore problems and pose solutions. The final project will be presented to peers.



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Writing Process



- Set a purpose, consider audience, and replicate authors' styles and patterns when writing narrative or informational text.
- Apply a variety of pre-writing strategies for narrative text. This could include the use of graphic organizers such as story maps or webs designed to develop a plot that includes major and minor characters, builds climax*, and uses dialogue to enhance a theme.
- Apply a variety of pre-writing strategies for informational text. Examples of informational text include problem/solution, and sequence.
- Review and revise drafts with audience and purpose in mind regarding consistent voice* and genre characteristics.
- Write for a specific purpose by using multiple paragraphs, sentence variety and voice to meet the needs of an audience. (Examples: word choice, level of formality, example.)
- Edit writing using proofreader's checklists both individually and in peer editing groups.

Personal Style

- Exhibit individual style to enhance the written message.
 - In narrative text, this could include personification*, humor or element of surprise.
 - In informational text, this could include emotional appeal, strong opinion or credible support.

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Grammar and Usage

- Use style conventions and a variety of grammatical structures in their writing including:
 - indefinite* and predicate pronouns
 - transitive* and intransitive* verbs
 - adjective and adverbial phrases
 - adjective and adverbial subordinate clauses*
 - comparative adverbs and adjectives
 - superlatives*
 - conjunctions*
 - compound sentences
 - appositives*
 - independent and dependent clauses*
 - introductory phrases
 - periods
 - commas
 - quotation marksand the uses of underlining and italics for specific purposes.

Spelling

- Spell frequently misspelled words correctly in the context of writing.

Handwriting

- Write legibly in his/her compositions.

Writing Attitude

- Be enthusiastic about writing.

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SPEAKING

Conventions

- Ask and respond to questions and remarks to engage the audience when presenting texts.
- Use rhyme, rhythm, cadence*, and word play for effect when presenting.
- Present work in standard American English or a developing version of Standard English if s/he is in the process of learning English.

Discourse

- Engage in interactive, extended discourse to socially construct meaning (examples: book clubs, literature circles, partnerships, or other conversation protocols).
- Discuss multiple text types in order to compare/contrast
 - ideas
 - form
 - styleto evaluate quality and to identify personally with a universal theme.
- Discuss written narratives that include a variety of literary and plot devices (examples: established context plot, point of view, sensory details, dialogue, suspense).
- Plan a focused and coherent oral presentation using an informational text pattern (example: problem/solution sequence), select a focus question to address, and organize the message to ensure that it matches the intent and the audience to which it will be delivered.

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LISTENING AND VIEWING

Conventions

- Respond to, evaluate, and analyze speeches and presentations delivered by peers.
- Demonstrate the appropriate social skills of audience behavior during speeches and presentations.

Examples:

- eye contact
- quiet and still
- attentive
- supportive

Response

- Summarize, take notes on key points, and ask clarifying questions.
- Respond thoughtfully to both classic and contemporary texts recognized for quality and literary merit.
- Identify a speaker's affective communications expressed through tone, mood and emotional cues.
- Relate a speaker's verbal communication such as tone of voice to the non-verbal message such as eye contact, posture or gestures.
- Respond to multiple texts when listened to or viewed by speaking, illustrating, and/or writing in order to compare/contrast similarities and differences in idea, form and style. Then evaluate quality and identify personal and universal themes.
- Respond to, evaluate, and analyze the credibility of a speaker who uses persuasion to affirm his/her point of view in a speech or presentation.
- Identify persuasive* and propaganda* techniques used in television, and identify false and misleading information.

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GLOSSARY TERMS

appendices (pl.) – additional materials attached to the end of a piece of writing

appositive – a noun or noun phrase that identifies another noun or pronoun that comes before it (Example: “Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer”.)

bibliography – a list of writings used or considered by an author in preparing a particular work

cadence – balanced, rhythmic flow, as of poetry

climax – a moment of great or culminating intensity in a narrative, especially the conclusion of a conflict or problem

comparative essay – a piece of writing that makes a comparison

conjunction – the part of speech that serves to connect words, phrases, clauses, or sentences

connotation – an idea or meaning suggested by or associated with a word or thing

denotation – the most direct or specific meaning of a word or expression

dependent clause – a group of words that cannot stand alone in a sentence

dialogue – a conversation between two or more people

external conflict – character struggle against an outside force

footnote – a note placed at the bottom of a book or manuscript that comments on or cites a reference for a part of the text

idioms – words used in a special way that may be different from their literal meaning. (Example: She felt *hot under the collar* when she was treated unfairly.)

imagery – the use of vivid language to represent objects, actions or ideas

indefinite pronouns – a pronoun that does not specifically name its antecedent (the noun or pronoun it replaces)

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Glossary Terms, continued



independent clause – a group of words in a complex sentence that could stand alone as a complete sentence

inferring – to arrive at a conclusion with the material you have read, an educated guess

internal conflict – a struggle within a character’s own mind. Usually a struggle between opposing desires, needs or emotions

intransitive verb – a verb that does not require an object to be grammatically correct

personification – the practice of giving a non-human thing the ability to act and speak as if it is human

persuasive – the ability to convince someone of something they may not have originally been in favor of

persuasive essay – a piece of writing that has the purpose of convincing the reader to agree with the position of the writer

plot – the series of events in a narrative piece

prediction – guessing what is going to happen in the future

propaganda – information that is meant to mislead or persuade

semantic analysis – the reader studies the meaning of words

SQ3R – (Survey, Question, Read, Review, Recite) a reading strategy used to better understand a selection

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superlative – the extreme degree of comparison of an adjective or adverb, as in best or brightest

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transitive verb – a verb that requires an object in order to be grammatically correct

understatement – the opposite of exaggeration

(Example: Michigan weather in January is slightly chilly.)

voice – a writer’s distinctive, personal tone or style



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