

**Units of Study in Opinion, Information and Narrative Writing  
Grade 6 Pacing Guide**

**Unit 2 - The Literary Essay**

Wk	On Demand Narrative Assignment, Found in Writing Pathways Assessment Book, Page 86													
<b>Bend 1: Writing Strong Literary Essays</b>														
Wk	Session	Mini-Lesson	Pg	Teaching Point	Pg	Active Engagement	Pg	Link	Pg	Conferring	Pg	Share	Pg	CCSS
1	1	Essay Boot Camp	2	"When writing an essay, it can help to start with a clear sense of the structure in which you'll be writing, and then you almost pour your content into that structure, changing the structure around if the content requires you to do so"	5	Explain to students that they will write an essay about a fairy tale, giving them time to talk together. Students should work in pairs to generate a thesis and reasons. Collect suggestions for a shared essay and have students use a box and bullets plan to write-in-the-air the first paragraph. Set students up to practice the second paragraph	5	Remind students that writers often brush up on the structure of the genre before diving into writing in it. Ask them to use the thinking of the past few moments to help them do that now	10	Ratcheting Up the Level of Student Work	11	Reflecting on Being an Essayist	12	W6.1, W6.4, W6.5, RL6.1, RL6.2, RL6.3, RL6.5, RL6.10, SL6.1, SL6.2, SL6.6, L6.1, L6.2, L6.3
2	2	Growing Big Idea from details about Characters	14	"To get big ideas about texts- and eventually grow those ideas into a literary essay- it pays to notice important details the author has included about the character, and then to reflect on the author's purpose for including a detail, and to jot down those thoughts"	15	Ask students to reread aloud to each other another passage from the shared text, paying attention to another detail that might reveal the characters, and then to write from what they notice. Have the class listen to and debrief based on one student's work	18	Channel students to start using the strategy you taught with the short story they chose to study. As soon as an individual begins writing about details in the text, send that person off, so those needing help remain to receive help	20	Generating Meaningful Ideas, Right from the Start	21	Thinking Gets Better Through Talk	23	W6.1, RL6.1, RL6.2, RL6.3, RL6.10, SL6.1, SL6.6, L6.1, L6.2, L6.3
2	3	Writing to Discover What a Character Really Wants	24	"When literary essayists are writing about characters, one way they make their ideas more powerful, more intriguing, is by looking beyond the obvious details about the characters to think about what motivates them - to figure out what the character really wants from other people and from life"	26	Ask students to try to talk long about the character's motivation. Coach in as needed, suggesting they trace the idea through the beginning, middle and end of the story. Share a strategy that one partnership used that will help students if they get stuck	28	Remind students that expert readers know which features of a story are worth studying and that it pays off to study a character's wants and motivations	29	Helping Students Write with Engagement and Precision	31	Setting Goals for Future Work	33	W6.1, W6.2, W6.3, W6.10, RL6.1, RL6.3, SL6.1, L6.1, L6.2, L6.3

3	4	Crafting Claims	35	"When literary essayists write about a character, they work hard to come up with an idea, a claim, that captures the whole of that person so the claim (or thesis statement) is big enough to think and write about for a while and can maybe even become the central idea of the entire essay"	36	Encourage students to reread what they've written to generate possible claims. Use a symphony share to allow multiple students to share claims they've generated. Ask students to settle on a still tentative claim. Suggest that they tweak and revise claims to be sure they encompass the whole text. Settle on a claim for a shared story and debrief	37	Set students up to start doing similar work with other students who read the same story, leading them toward being ready to do this work on the page of their notebook, settling on a claim for their own character essay	41	Strengthening Claims and Supporting Them with Compelling Evidence	42	Drawing on Structure Boot Camp to Organize Evidence	44	W6.1, RL6.1, RL6.2, RL6.3, RL6.4, SL6.1, SL6.3, SL6.4, SL6.6, L6.1, L6.2, L6.3
3	5	Conveying Evidence: Summarizing, Storytelling, and Quoting	46											
4	6	Studying a Mentor Text to Construct Literary Essays	54	"We will be researching this question, 'What makes for a good literary essay? And what, exactly, does a writer do to go from making a claim and collecting evidence to actually constructing an essay?'"	55	Have students study a mentor text. Start annotating a large copy of the essay to help students get started, then listen and watch as they discuss their observations. Share some students' observations	55	Show writers the plan that undergirded the students' exemplar essay that they just studied. Suggest writers prepare to revise their own plans to include elements they may have neglected to include. They will then write their essays	59	Small Groups to Support Students as They Draft	61	Using a Checklist for Self-Analysis and Goal-Setting	63	W6.1, W6.4, W6.5, W6.9, W6.10, RL6.1, RL6.2, RL6.3, RL6.10, SL6.1, SL6.2, SL6.3, L6.1, L6.2, L6.3
4	7	Revising Essays to Be Sure You Analyze as Well as Cite Text Evidence	65	"When an essayist makes a claim and includes evidence to support that claim, that alone doesn't convince readers that the claim is justified. Essayists often revise their essays to make sure they explain why and how the evidence connects with, or supports the claim"	67	Help students as they work with partners to analyze how a scene supports the rationale for a claim, using thought prompts to push their thinking	69	Remind students of the importance of analyzing their evidence to provide their readers with a more compelling argument in support of their claim	70	Troubleshooting Common Problems with Analysis of Evidence	71	Giving Feedback Using the Checklist	73	W6.1, W6.5, W7.1, RL6.1, RL6.2, SL6.1, SL6.3, L6.1, L6.2, L6.3, L6.6

Bend 2: Elevating the Complexity of Literary Essays														
Wk	Session	Mini-Lesson	Pg	Teaching Point	Pg	Active Engagement	Pg	Link	Pg	Conferring	Pg	Share	Pg	CCSS
5	8	Looking for Themes in the Trouble of a Text	76	"Often the life lessons that a character learns are the life lessons that the author hope that the reader will learn. To figure out what those life lessons might be, it helps to look more closely at the troubles a character faces, and how they get in the way of what the character wants, asking, 'What lessons does the character learn from all this?'"	78	Students should think about the lessons a character learns by examining the motivations and the problems of the protagonist. Invite students to share their thinking and their process	81	Remind students that today they'll be aiming for universality as they chart the motivation, problem, and possible theme in the same story about which they wrote their character essay	82	The Power of Compliments	84	Planning a Thematic Essay	86	W6.1, W6.4, W6.5, W6.10, RL6.1, RL6.2, RL6.3, SL6.1, SL6.4, SL6.6, L6.1, L6.2, L6.3
5	9	Drafting Using All that You Know	89											
6	10	First Impressions and Closing Remarks	93	"When literary essayists write introductions, they often lead with a universal statement about life and then transition to the text-based claim itself, by narrowing their focus to the particular story they are writing about"	95	Channel students to think about their own essay by first thinking of the essay's larger landscape. Ask them to work with a partner to begin to generate lists of possible leads	97	Summarize the steps of the lesson. Ask students to recall and name what they know about revision	97	Addressing Struggles	98	Writing Conclusions	100	W6.1, W6.4, W6.5, RL6.1, RL6.2, SL6.1, L6.1, L6.2, L6.3, L6.6
6	11	Quoting Texts	103	"Essayists know that the words of a text matter, and they make careful decisions, choosing powerful quotes or parts of quotes, to support their thinking"	105	Set students up to practice finding and using quotes for their own literary essays, repeating the process you demonstrated	108	Send writers off to work, reminding them of the full array of potential activities they can select from to strengthen their essays	108	Finding and Selecting Powerful Quotes	109	Minding the Gaps in Essays	111	W6.1, W6.4, W6.9, RL6.1, RL6.2, RL6.5, SL6.1, SL6.3, SL6.4, L6.1, L6.2, L6.3

7	12	Editing Inquiry Centers	113											
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**Bend 3: Writing Compare-and-Contrast Essays**

Wk	Session	Mini-Lesson	Pg	Teaching Point	Pg	Active Engagement	Pg	Link	Pg	Conferring	Pg	Share	Pg	CCSS
7	13	Building the Muscles to Compare and Contrast	118	"Writers can compare and contrast by putting two subjects side by side and asking, 'How are they similar? How are they different?' Then they write in an organized way"	121	Have students try the same work with different objects. Offer two of your shirts for the class to compare and encourage them to think of categories that might guide their thinking. Debrief. Recall the teaching point and put today's work in a bigger context	122	Set students up to go off and work in centers	123	Deepening Students' Initial Observations	124	Strategies for Comparing and Contrasting	126	W6.2, W6.4, W6.9, W6.10, RL6.1, RL6.3, SL6.1, SL6.2, SL6.4, L6.1, L6.2, L6.3
8	14	Comparing and Contrasting Themes Across Texts	128	"Essayists bring all of their skills to compare-and-contrast essays - by comparing what is similar and contrasting what is different about the themes in different texts"	130	Direct students to compare and contrast a theme across two stories they have read	132	Set up students to write their own compare-and-contrast essays, on texts and a theme of their own choosing. Emphasize the importance of this project- that their essays will culminate the unit	133	Taking the Bumps in the Road in Stride	134	Being Literary Scholars	136	W6.2, W6.5, W6.9, RL6.1, RL6.2, RL6.10, SL6.1, SL6.2, SL6.4, L6.1, L6.2, L6.3
8	15	Applying What You Have Learned in the Past to Today's Revision Work	138	"Essayists ask, 'What do I already know - and what resources can I use - that will help me do this revision work well?' Then they hold themselves accountable for drawing on all they've learned before as they revise their drafts"	140	Direct students to review their own drafts and all the resources available to them, so they can plan meaningful ways to revise their essays	142	Encourage writers to call forth and use everything they know about writing strong essays, and send them off to work	142	Thinking about How to Write an Essay, Not Just What	143	Offering Constructive Feedback	145	W6.2, W6.5, W6.9, RL6.2, SL6.1, L6.1, L6.2, L6.3

