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English Language Arts Grade Six

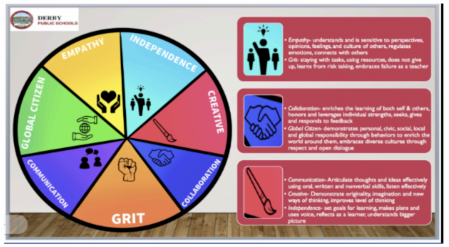
Derby's Instructional Core Beliefs

Derby Public Schools believes curriculum outlines what students will know and be able to do as a result of their experiences in our classrooms. Teachers continue to develop effective ways to implement the "what" of the curriculum with "how" can be more effective for student learning. They engage in experiences that are framed around the following tenets:

- *Curriculum establishes what learners will know and be able to do through assured experiences.*
- *The curriculum is built on a series of learning progressions.*
- *The district's model for High-Quality Instruction involves equitable access to well planned tasks that grow relationships, risk taking and agency for learning in all students. Learning is developed through all of us and is cultivated through personalized actionable feedback, a growth mindset, and developmental relationships among all learners.*
- *Assessment is a co-created process in a learning environment that enables participants to understand how learners are thinking, what they know, and what skills need to be developed and refined.*

Derby's Vision of HQI Derby's Portrait of the Graduate References

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Content Area: English Language Arts	Course: Grade 6 ELA	Grade Level: Six
		

Unit Titles	Length of Unit
• *Reading Closely and Writing to Learn (Informational Writing)*	7-8 weeks
• *Working With Evidence & Taking a Stand (Argumentative Writing)*	7-8 weeks
• *Understanding Perspectives (Narrative Writing)*	7-8 weeks
• *Research Reading and Writing*	8-10 weeks

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Course Level Overview

The Grade Six Common Core-aligned ELA curriculum modules were designed to help teachers build students' capacity to read, think, talk, and write about complex texts. The modules are designed to fulfill the Common Core vision of students who are truly college and career ready. The modules address the reading standards for both literary and informational texts, the writing standards, the speaking and listening standards; the modules also incorporate a contextualized approach to many of the language standards. While this document focuses on writing, all strands of the ELA standards (reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language) are all tightly interwoven in the modules. Students need something to write or speak about, and discussion can be a way for students to effectively formulate their ideas before writing.

Students will engage deeply in reading, writing, speaking and listening across four main units:

- *Reading Closely and Writing to Learn (Informational Writing)*
- *Working With Evidence & Taking a Stand (Argumentative Writing)*
- *Understanding Perspectives (Narrative Writing)*
- *Research Reading and Writing*

Unit Title	*Reading Closely and Writing to Learn*	**Length of Unit**	7-8 weeks

Inquiry Questions (Engaging & Debatable)-taken from Wiggins & McTighe "Essential Questions"	• What is the relationship between fiction and truth? What "truths" can we learn from fiction? • What do good readers do, especially when they don't comprehend a text? • How does *what* I am reading influence *how* I should read it? • Why am I writing? For whom? • How do good writers communicate effectively? • How does academic (formal writing) differ from personal writing?
Standards*	**CT Core Standards:** **Reading:** RL 6.1, RL 6.2, RL 6.3, RI 6.1 **Writing:** W 6.2a-f, W6.3a-e, W6.4a, W6.9a-b, W6.11e **Language:** L6.1a-d, L6.2a-b, L6.3a-b
Concepts and Strands (Big Ideas)	● Reading closely for deeper meaning; including re-reading the same text ● Learning to read determine importance and plan sharing of information ● Writing to learn, and researching a topic. Narrowing that topic into subtopics to report.
Key Vocabulary*	cited evidence, purpose, theme, central idea, main idea, annotate, evidence, support, introductions, main idea paragraphs, organization, transitions, conclusions, text, plot,

*Visit Connecticut's Core Standards for more information regarding standards and progressions: https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/CT-Core-Standards/2014/06/CCS-ELA_6-12_Standards_Progression.pdf

Unit Title	Reading Closely and Writing to Learn	**Length of Unit**	7-8 weeks

Critical Content: **My students will Know…**	**Key Skills:** **My students will be able to (Do)…**
• different purposes for reading and what to focus on during a read (ex: figurative language, learning content, comparing two character's journeys) • what theme means and the difference between theme and topic • how to find theme • ways to find evidence in texts • how to categorize their evidence and organize it to support deeper analysis/their position on a text • different points of view/perspectives when writing and when reading (ex: first vs. third person) • how to formulate a topic for writing, including researching and creating a central idea, main ideas • ways to organize writing, including planning a piece, structuring a written	• read closely with awareness of the purpose for reading (i.e. what am I focusing on? Content and information? Structure and language? Author's point of view?) • read different types of texts, such as novels, excerpts, non-fiction articles, and poetry on the same topic • cite at least 2 pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. • create a short response that includes a clear answer/thesis, relevant text evidence and explanations that further explain inferences and analysis of topics • analyze how a character's background and life experiences help to shape who they are/how this impacts his or her journey • describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes (major events) as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution. • determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; connecting between beginning, middle, and ending events and how these events help shape the theme • write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content (engage in the research-based writing process by selecting a topic, researching evidence, and organizing that evidence in a relevant way according to the audience) • introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information (clear introduction with a topic/thesis statement, clear paragraphs with main ideas, cited evidence, and analysis of evidence, clear conclusion that summarizes the topic and effectively wraps up the topic • develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples (see Empowering Writers, "Golden Bricks")

response into logically flowing sections ● ways to transition in writing ● literal versus inferential thinking ● how to access a variety of CREDIBLE sources ● ways to develop success criteria for self reflections ● what is style and tone in a piece of text	● use appropriate transitions to create cohesion and clarity to writing (using transition words to build meaning/ show relationship between concepts such as cause & effect, differences, similarities, etc.) ● use precise language, maintain a formal style in writing (academic vs. colloquial, domain specific vocabulary, shades of meaning) ● provide conclusions and concluding statements ● produce text (print or nonprint) that explores a variety of cultures and perspectives. ● gather relevant information from **multiple** print and digital sources, including across genres (ex: pulling evidence from a novel and an informational article, from a poem and a non-fiction article) ● Ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, possessive). ● Use intensive pronouns (e.g., *myself, ourselves*). ● Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.* ● Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).* ● Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. ● Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.* ● Spell correctly. ● Vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style.* ● Maintain consistency in style and tone

Assessments:	Performance Tasks: ● Inferring about a main character using cited evidence ● Identifying perspective and using evidence from informational texts AND fiction texts on the same topic/subject area ● Writing different components of a process piece, including introductions, body paragraphs, and conclusions
Teacher Resources:	EngageNY, Expeditionary Learning, CT Core Standards, Derby Library databases (at school and in the public library resources), Culturally responsive texts

Unit Title	*Working With Evidence & Taking a Stand (Argumentative Writing)*	**Length of Unit**	7-8 weeks

Inquiry Questions (Engaging & Debatable)-taken from Wiggins & McTighe "Essential Questions"	● In what way does our environment (place, people, society) and time period affect the adversity we face? ● How do strategic thinkers discuss and understand challenging issues or problems? ● What do good readers do, especially when they don't comprehend a text? ● How does *what* I am reading influence *how* I should read it? ● Why am I writing? For whom? ● How do good writers communicate effectively? ● How do I build a strong argument and justify my stance? ● What qualifies as relevant and credible evidence?
Standards*	**CT Core Standards:** **Reading:** RL 6.1, RL 6.2, RL 6.4, RL 6.5, RI 6.2, RI 6.3, RI 6.4, RI 6.5, RI 6.6, RI 6.7, RI 6.8, RI 6.9a **Writing:** W 6.1a-e, W 6.2a-f, W 6.4, W 6.7, W.6.9a, W6.11a-b **Language: (**L 6.1 a-e, L 6.2 a-b, L 6.3a-b) [review]; L 6.4a-d, L6.5a-c
Concepts and Strands (Big Ideas)	● Elements of a Strong Argument ● Developing Ideas ● Clear Presentation
Key Vocabulary*	task, purpose, stand, message, evidence, relevance, credible, classify, select, evaluate, central idea, accurate, conclusion

Unit Title	*Working With Evidence & Taking a Stand (Argumentative Writing)*	**Length of Unit**	7-8 weeks

Critical Content: **My students will Know…**	**Key Skills:** **My students will be able to (Do)…**
• Different purposes for reading and what to focus on during a read (ex: figurative language, learning content, comparing two character's journeys) • How to find theme and central idea • ways to find evidence in texts • analyze author's craft to reveal authorial moves that build meaning for the reader • identify figurative language and analyze for deeper meaning • shades of meaning in vocabulary words, including negative and positive connotations • how to categorize their evidence and organize it to support deeper analysis/their position on a text • claim vs. evidence • supporting claims with valid/logical inferences based on credible evidence	• cite at least 2 pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. • create a short response that includes a clear answer/thesis, relevant text evidence and explanations that further explain inferences and analysis of topics • describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes (major events) as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution. • determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; connecting between beginning, middle, and ending events and how these events help shape the theme • Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments. • Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes). • Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings. • 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. • Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text. • Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue. • Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not. • Compare and contrast one author's presentation of events with that of another (e.g., a memoir written by and a biography on the same person).

● how to research across multiple sources ● how to cite evidence across multiple sources ● how to synthesize information across multiple sources to develop an original idea ● ways to organize writing, including planning a piece, structuring a written response into logically flowing sections ● how to create an effective introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion ● how to create visual representations that add meaning/help build the reader's understanding of an idea	● Read and research from multiple print and digital sources to better understand an issue and various perspectives on it before they form a position of their own and develop an argument in support of that position. ● Presents a position that arises from central ideas and evidence found in a range of diverse, credible and significant sources. ● Adopts an organizational strategy, including an introduction and conclusion, which clearly and compellingly communicates the argument. ● Purposefully state a precise position that is linked to a clearly identified context (topic, problem, issue) that establishes its relevance. [Introduction] ● Presents a position based on a comprehensive understanding of the issue, and establishes a series of valid claims [big ideas/argument paragraphs] that emerge from BOTH reasoned analysis using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text ● use words, phrases and clauses to create cohesion and clarity among claims, reasons and evidence; uses words that reinforce relationships among ideas ● Ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, possessive) ● Use intensive pronouns (e.g., *myself, ourselves*).Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.* ● Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).* ● Recognize variations from standard English in their own and others' writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.* ● Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. ● Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.* ● Spell correctly. ● Vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style.* ● Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. ● Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. ● Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., *audience, auditory, audible*).

	● Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech. ● Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary). ● Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. ● Interpret figures of speech (e.g., personification) in context. ● Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words. ● Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., *stingy, scrimping, economical, unwasteful, thrifty*). ● Maintain consistency in style and tone

Assessments:	Performance task: ● Research, plan and write an argumentative essay ● Writing different components of a process piece, including introductions, body paragraphs, and conclusions ● Selecting and analyzing the best text evidence to support a claim ● 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
Teacher Resources:	EngageNY, Expeditionary Learning, ODELL Education, CT Core Standards, Derby Library databases (school/public library resources), Culturally responsive texts

Unit Title	*Understanding Perspectives (Narrative Writing)*	**Length of Unit**	7-8 weeks

Inquiry Questions (Engaging & Debatable)	● What are the reasons individuals and cultures create narratives of their experiences? ● Why do people tell stories? ● What makes writing worth reading? ● How does an author create meaning in a text, and what makes that meaning valid? ● How can we best express ourselves? ● How is our perception of the world shaped on storytelling [in books and films]?
Standards*	**CT Core Standards:** **Reading:** RL 6.1, RL 6.2, RL 6.3, RL 6.4, RL 6.6a, RL 6.7, RL 6.9, RI 6.1 **Writing:** W 6.3a-e, W 6.4a, W6.9, W6.9a, W6.11c **Language:** L6.1a-d, L6.2a-b, L6.3a-b, L6.5a-c
Concepts and Strands (Big Ideas)	● What does it mean to have a perspective? ● What makes an effective narrative?
Key Vocabulary*	Narrative, Drawing Conclusions, Figurative Language, Sensory Words, Comparative Analysis, Citing Textual Evidence, Characterization, Character Development, Anchor Text, Dialogue, Sequence of Events, Transition Words, Similes, Metaphor, personification

Unit Title	*Understanding Perspectives (Narrative Writing)*	**Length of Unit**	7-8 weeks

Critical Content: **My students will Know…**	**Key Skills:** **My students will be able to (Do)…**
● what is figurative language and what is literal language ● what it means to infer or connote ● theme ● plot elements ● summarizing and synthesizing ● theme and central idea ● what is figurative language ● various poetic devices (alliteration, rhyming…) ● various figures of speech ● how to identify a clause and phrase ● difference between a claim and counterclaim ● ways to use technology to access a variety of texts and resources ● settings can impact characters	● cite at least 2 pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. ● create a short response that includes a clear answer/thesis, relevant text evidence and explanations that further explain inferences and analysis of topics ● describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes (major events) as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution. ● determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; connecting between beginning, middle, and ending events and how these events help shape the theme ● Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments. ● Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes). ● Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings ● 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. ● Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text. ● identify the elements of a narrative or a drama including setting, plot, and characters ● describe how the plot progresses in a narrative or drama. ● describe how characters respond or change in a narrative or drama ● determine how context impacts setting, plot, and characters in a narrative or drama.

	● Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences. ● Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically. ● Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters. ● use sensory details to develop experiences, including descriptions and emotions related to the plot ● use dialogue that reflects age, region, or location and emotion ● use figurative language to enhance meaning of descriptions ● Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another; Use story transitions to show that the action is changing; when the character(s) moves to a new place; to connect the events in a story ● Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events. ● Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.

Assessments:	Performance Task: Develop and create a narrative piece of writing. Be able to self assess the quality of narrative writing.
Teacher Resources:	EngageNY, Expeditionary Learning, CT Core Standards, Derby Library databases (at school and in the public library resource), Culturally responsive texts

Unit Title	*Researching to Write and Present Arguments*	**Length of Unit**	

Critical Content: **My students will Know…**	**Key Skills:** **My students will be able to (Do)…**
● how we determine point of view ● strategies for solving unknown words ● elements of text features ● how arguments are crafted ● difference between compare and contrast ● how claims support arguments ● how to connect words and ideas ● what makes for formal writing and academic vocabulary ● examples of figurative language ● ways to use technology in research and presentation ● text features to consider in publishing ● what are synonyms, antonyms, and ● a proper citation entails ● various conventions to use in formal writing	● Cite pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. ● Determine two central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text. ● Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone. ● Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author distinguishes his or her position from that of others. ● Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject. ● Analyze how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts. ● Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. ● Introduce claim(s), acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically. ● Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. ● Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence. ● Use formal writing and be organized in your writing (introduction and conclusion) ● With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well the purpose and audience have been addressed. ● Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources.

● how to identify a main idea ● how to narrow a topic ● parts of speech and how they are used in messaging ● how to evaluate reasoning ● process for editing and revising ●	● Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims.. ● Write routinely over extended periods of time ● Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study. ● Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence. ● Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation. ● Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and findings and emphasize salient points. ● Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. ● Place phrases and clause with a sentence, recognizing and correcting misplaced and dangling modifiers, demonstrate command of conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation and spelling when writing ● Use a comma to separate coordinate adjectives and use strategies to spell correctly. ● Use context as a clue to the meaning of unknown words ● Explain relationships between words (synonyms, antonyms, analogies, etc).

Assessments:	Performance Task: Create and share a documentary on a topic that matters to our community
Teacher Resources:	EngageNY, Expeditionary Learning, CT Core Standards, Derby Library databases (at school and in the public library resource), Culturally responsive texts

References

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