



# GRADE 6 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION

## UNIT OVERVIEW

This assessment task is embedded in a 4–6 week unit that uses the topic of technology in education as a means to teach students how to analyze and navigate complex informational texts. As part of the unit, students will read four informational texts on the subject of technology in education and complete assessment tasks. Prior to the final assessment, students complete two formative reading tasks that build in complexity and are sequenced to scaffold student learning for the culminating assessment, in which students write an argumentative essay. It is important to note that writing arguments, with claims and evidence, is introduced in writing anchor standard 1 of the Common Core standards for the first time in 6th grade. Thus, for many students, this may be their first attempt to independently write a formal argument.

### Task Details

**Task Name:** The Role of Technology in Education

**Grade:** 6

**Subject:** English Language Arts

**Depth of Knowledge:** 3

**Task Description:** This task asks students to write an essay in which they argue for either a limited or expansive role of technology in education. Students must be able to state a claim and support it with clear reasons and relevant evidence, demonstrating an understanding of the topic and/or text.

### Standards:

**W.6.1:** Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

- a. Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly.
- b. Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
- c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons.
- d. Establish and maintain a formal style.
- e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.

**L.6.2:** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation and spelling when writing.

- a. Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.
- b. Spell correctly.

### Materials Needed:

“The Purpose of Education” by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

[http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/documentsentry/doc\\_470200\\_000/](http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/documentsentry/doc_470200_000/)

“What Would Jobs Do?: Technology & Schools that Work” by Rupert Murdoch (*New York Post*, October 17, 2011)

[http://www.nypost.com/p/news/opinion/opedcolumnists/what\\_would\\_jobs\\_do\\_SeJNmLMhG6euhtsgleXhGP](http://www.nypost.com/p/news/opinion/opedcolumnists/what_would_jobs_do_SeJNmLMhG6euhtsgleXhGP)

“A Silicon Valley School That Doesn’t Compute” by Matt Richtel (*New York Times*, October 22, 2011)

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/23/technology/at-waldorf-school-in-silicon-valley-technology-can-wait.html?pagewanted=all>

“Twitter in the Classroom” by John Calhoun (Tech-Nation, December 3, 2010)

<http://56wrtg1150.wikidot.com/twitter-in-the-classroom>



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

The task and instructional supports in the following pages are designed to help educators understand and implement Common Core-aligned tasks that are embedded in a unit of instruction. We have learned through our pilot work that focusing instruction on units anchored in rigorous Common Core-aligned assessments drives significant shifts in curriculum and pedagogy. Call out boxes and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) support are included to provide ideas around how to include multiple entry points for diverse learners.

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## PERFORMANCE TASK





**StepBack Questions:** Please answer the following questions in the space below. Your responses will be collected but not graded.

1. What did you do to complete the Performance-Based Assessment task? List the steps that you took to complete the task.

2. What did you find easy about the Performance-Based Assessment task?

3. What did you find difficult about the Performance-Based Assessment task?



# GRADE 6 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION

## RUBRIC

This task was scored using a primary-trait rubric and a secondary-trait rubric.

**Primary-trait rubrics** focus attention on the rating of a single trait considered to be the most essential for demonstrating success regarding a particular product or performance. They can be used most effectively by teachers with the ELA model of assessment tasks for several reasons. First, by isolating one component of written discourse to assess, primary-trait scoring allows raters or teachers to focus sharply on that component without being distracted by many other possibilities. The component that is chosen for assessment is not just any component but one that is essential to success on a particular assessment task. The study of the work is focused on the heart of the task. If students are weak on the heart of the task, teachers have sufficient data to plan lessons for re-teaching and/or modifying lessons. Second, because the scoring guide uses language from the task and the Common Core standards to define its score levels, it allows for greater alignment between the task assigned and the trait or dimension being assessed. At the very least, anyone who looks at the scoring guide rubric should expect to see such a connection. For its specificity and clarity alone, a primary-trait rubric offers important advantages over other means of scoring.

**Secondary-trait rubrics** identify assessed skills and content from the task that have not been identified in the primary-trait rubric. They accompany primary-trait rubrics and are used after primary-trait rubrics.

## Grade 6 English Language Arts: The Role of Technology in Education Primary- and Secondary-Trait Scoring Guide for Assessment Task 3

**Primary Trait:** Argument for either an expansive or limited role of technology in education, using textual evidence.

**Scoring Guide:**

Scoring Point	Description
4	Argumentative text contains a clear claim for either a limited <b>or</b> expansive role of technology in education. Claim is supported with clear reasons and relevant evidence from at least two of the articles read and discussed in class. Additionally, there is clear evidence of the writer’s analysis of this evidence.
3	Argumentative text makes a claim for either a limited <b>or</b> expansive role of technology in education. Claim is supported with reasons and mostly relevant evidence from at least two of the articles read and discussed in class.
2	Argumentative text makes a claim for limited <b>and</b> expansive roles of technology in education, or makes a confusing claim related to the topic. Claim is unevenly supported with reasons and evidence from one or two of the articles read and discussed in class that may or may not be relevant to the claim.
1	Argumentative text either <b>fails</b> to make a claim for a limited or an expansive role of technology in education, or makes an unrelated claim. Claim is not supported with reasons and/or uses weakly unrelated evidence from two, one, or none of the articles. There may be no textual evidence found in this text.

**Secondary Trait:** Argumentative text includes a clear introduction of the topic, connecting words and phrases (i.e., transitions), and a concluding statement or section. The essay establishes and maintains a formal style.

Scoring Guide:

Scoring Point	Description
4	Argumentative text in which the topic is introduced clearly, ideas are organized using transitions to help clarify relationships among ideas, and a concluding statement or section relates directly to the information or argument presented. The text establishes and maintains a formal style.
3	Argumentative text in which the topic is introduced clearly and ideas are organized using transitions that are limited but appropriate to the text. There is a concluding statement or section, but it may be unexplained or not well developed. The text is mostly written in a formal style.
2	Argumentative text in which the topic is introduced. The transitional words or phrases are limited or used inappropriately. There is no concluding statement or section in the text. The text may include some formal writing, but it is not sufficiently maintained.
1	Argumentative text that does not contain an introduction or conclusion. There are no transitions that help to clarify relationships among ideas. The text is written in an informal style.

**Secondary Trait:** Argumentative text demonstrates use of standard English focusing on capitalization and spelling when writing.

Scoring Guide:

Scoring Point	Description
4	Consistently uses standard English as it pertains to the proper use of capitalization and spelling
3	Generally uses standard English as it pertains to the proper use of capitalization and spelling. Minor errors may appear, but they do not impede the reader's understanding of the text.
2	Limited use of standard English as it pertains to the proper use of capitalization and spelling. Several errors may appear throughout the text, causing slight confusion for the reader.
1	Little evidence of the use of standard English as it pertains to the use of capitalization and spelling. Errors in these areas impede the reader's understanding of the text.



# GRADE 6 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION

## ANNOTATED STUDENT WORK

Annotated student work in this section contains student work at a range of score points. The student work shows examples of student understandings and misunderstandings of the task. The work is annotated against the standards cited for the task. The summaries explain how each example was scored against the Common Core–aligned rubric, and the next steps suggest possible instructional moves a teacher could take with each student.

## Grade 6 English Language Arts: The Role of Technology in Education Annotated Student Work

### Level 4 Student Work

There is one classroom where a child is struggling because the teacher is not teaching at the pace he or she needs to understand topics. There is another classroom where a child does not understand the work at first but uses alternative methods to better their understanding of the topic. What is the difference between these two classrooms? The second one uses expansive technology while the other uses limited. Using technology in the classroom can help students to understand topics better and rises the rate of student achievement.

**Comment [I1]:** The introductory paragraph establishes a formal style in an active, engaging and authoritative voice. (W.6.1d)

**Comment [I2]:** Introduces a clear claim for an expansive role of technology in education. (W.6.1a)

More than one million American students every year drop out of high school. Why is this? They do not understand the topics and they give up on education. Another reason is that they are bored and do not find the topics interesting. So Rupert Murdoch says in “Steve Jobs and Changing the American classroom: what would Jobs do?” “Our children are growing up in Steve Job’s world. They are eager to learn and quick to embrace new technology... But the minute the step into their classrooms, its a different story it’s like going back in time.” This is really irritating because there is technology to fix it. There are laptops, Ipads and other devices that can help the students. Using these devices will bring up test grades. Before a North Carolina school used technology, only 26% of students went on to college. Now almost all of the students go on to college.

**Comment [Jd3]:** Includes clear reasons in support of claim. (W.6.1b) Evidence provided from one of the articles is clearly linked and reflects analysis of the cited text. (W.6.1)

Twitter in the classroom may seem like a silly idea. However, recent studies have shown this method to work. Students who do not usually participate are less scared to do so. Students are able to punch in answers or questions anonymously making them not have to worry about asking a “dumb question”. In fact, after Twitter began to be used, 75% of students in a classroom began to participate more. If a student is absent, they can still get the lesson by logging on and seeing what the class discussions is about. When they come back, they won’t be confused with what is going on in the class. Twitter in the classroom can help teachers to work together to find new ways to teach new topics. An ELA and writing teacher can work together to prepare their students for the ELA Exam. For example, John Calhoun says, “The study showed that students at the middle and elementary school level whose teachers regularly collaborated with teacher-librarians scored 3% to 7% higher on statewide reading and language arts assessments than those where little to no communication takes place.” This shows that Twitter can bring teachers together to work on students needs. Students would be able to do better in school.

**Comment [Jd4]:** Student uses “in fact” to clarify relationship between their claim and supporting evidence. (W.6.1b, c)

**Comment [I5]:** Another example of how this student uses words and phrases to link evidence to reasoning in support of a claim.

The use of technology in the classroom will help to boost student achievement and participation in school. Instead of teaching a child in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with methods of the 20<sup>th</sup>, doesn’t it make sense to use the methods and technology of the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

**Comment [Jd6]:** Conclusion links to the information and argument presented. (W.6.1e)

**Grade 6 English Language Arts: The Role of Technology in Education  
Annotated Student Work**

**This student work represents a score point of 4 on the primary-trait rubric.**

<b>Criterion and Score Point</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Instructional Next Steps</b>
<p><b>Primary Trait:</b> Argument that includes clear claim with relevant reasons and evidence.</p> <p>(Score Point 4)</p>	<p>This argumentative essay includes a clear argument (expand technology in the classroom) with relevant claims (e.g., “Using technology in the classroom can help students to understand topics better and rises [sic] the rate of student achievement”), and supporting reasons and evidence (“75% . . . began to participate more. . .”). He/she also cited evidence from two texts (“What Would Jobs Do?” and “Twitter in the Classroom”). Lastly, the writer shows elements of inferential thinking and analysis of these texts (“Twitter can bring teachers together to work on students’ needs. Students would be able to do better in school.”)</p>	<p>This student could work on acknowledging and/or exploring counterclaims which addresses the 7th and 8th grade standards for argumentative essays.</p>
<p><b>Secondary Trait:</b> Includes clear introduction, connecting words and phrases, and a concluding sentence or section, and maintains a formal style.</p> <p>(Score Point 3)</p>	<p>The writer includes a clear introduction that connects to the overall argument presented. She/he uses the technique of rhetorical questions to heighten the reader’s interest in the topic. The student used words and phrases to clarify her/his logic and connect evidence to her/his reasoning. Although there is a conclusion present, it needs to be further developed.</p>	<p>She/he transitions effectively between ideas but may benefit from practice using more sophisticated phrases for smoother transitions among ideas in the essay (e.g., “However, recent studies have shown...” “This is irritating because...”).</p> <p>Teacher could provide student with models of effective conclusions that demonstrate different ways to expand or draw conclusions.</p>
<p><b>Secondary Trait:</b> Demonstrates the use of standard English, focusing on capitalization and spelling when writing.</p> <p>(Score Point 4)</p>	<p>The writer consistently uses standard English throughout the text, with only minor errors the area of capitalization and spelling.</p>	

## Grade 6 English Language Arts: The Role of Technology in Education Annotated Student Work

### Level 3 Student Work

Many people think that if technology in education gets expanded, it is for the better. However, others think that technology in education is better limited. In the article, “Steve Jobs & Changing the American Classroom,” What would Jobs do?” by Robert Murdoch, it says “we need to approach the education industry the way my friend Steve Jobs approached every industry.” So clearly, Rupert Murdoch thinks that we should use more technology in education. Although some people think that technology in education should be used to only a certain extent, technology in classrooms should be used more often, and it should be improved.

There are many reasons why technology in schools should be expanded. One of the reasons is because in some schools, they use Twitter to help kids understand more about the lesson. In the article, “Twitter In The Classroom,” by John Calhoun, it says, “With Twitter, educators are able to connect with other educators, and students are able to connect with other students all throughout the world.” In this quote it shows that both educators and students are able to exchange ideas, through the use of Twitter. Another reason is that students grades are going up, due to the extra reviews students no longer have to feel intimidated if their question is dumb because if they want, on twitter and Hotseat (like Twitter), students are able to send anonymous questions. Those are just some of the reasons why expansive technology in education is better than limiting technology in education.

For those people that think education is better limited, others would say that they are totally wrong. In the article, “Steve Jobs & Changing the American Classroom: What would Jobs do?” by Rupert Murdoch, it says, “At the top end, our public schools are producing fewer graduates who have the skills necessary for the world’s best jobs. In the middle, too many children float from grade to grade in schools that never challenge them.” That means that students aren’t able to do the level of work that they are qualified for. The text also says, “At the bottom, more than a million Americans-a year—that’s 7,000 every school day—drop out high school.” That basically shows that students actually aren’t doing well. For those that actually are doing well, they aren’t able to do better. It is pretty obvious why over a million students are dropping out of school every year. If more education was brought into schools, then we would probably tell, technology is better when it hits schools.

Those are reasons why expansive technology in education is going to come to good use. As Rupert Murdoch said, we need to bring more technology into schools, for the better of students.

**Comment [jd7]:** Makes a claim for an expansive role of technology in education, but by using the term “improved” distracts from the central claim and does not expand on this idea later in the essay. (W.6.1a)

**Comment [i8]:** Student clarifies the relationship between the quotation (evidence) and her/his claim (technology enhances learning). (W.6.1c)

**Comment [i9]:** Transitional words and phrases are used throughout the essay. (W.6.1c)

**Comment [i10]:** The second paragraph includes relevant evidence from text in support of claim. (W.6.1b)

**Comment [jd11]:** Student cites evidence but it is not relevant in support of the claim and does not demonstrate a full understanding of the topic. (W.6.1b)

**Comment [i12]:** Student attempts a conclusion that follows from their argument but does not end with a clear connection between education and technology. (W.6.1e)

**Grade 6 English Language Arts: The Role of Technology in Education  
Annotated Student Work**

**This student work represents a score point of 3 on the primary-trait rubric.**

<b>Criterion and Score Point</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Instructional Next Steps</b>
<p><b>Primary Trait:</b> Argument that includes clear claim with relevant reasons and evidence. (Score Point 3)</p>	<p>This argumentative essay includes a claim connected to the topic “The Role of Technology in Education.” Additionally, it provides evidence explicitly from two texts (“Twitter in the Classroom” and “What Would Jobs Do?”) to support its claim. However, the explanation of the reasons supporting the claim is often general and/or incomplete (e.g., no reason is given for how expansive technology can help to challenge students).</p>	<p>An instructional next step is to work with this writer to further develop his/her skills in identifying relevant evidence in support of the claim, and how to draw inferences from it. Student may also need organizational strategies to think through details and evidence before writing out paragraphs. One way of helping students explain the connection between claims and reasons is to help them more clearly explain their argument; in this case, the goal of education (to develop critical thinking? to build knowledge?) and how technology would either limit or expand that goal.</p>
<p><b>Secondary Trait:</b> Includes clear introduction, connecting words and phrases, and a concluding sentence or section, and maintains a formal style. (Score Point 3)</p>	<p>The writer includes a clear introduction that showcases his/her claim on the topic. Additionally, the writer uses connecting words and phrases to show the relationship among ideas (e.g., “Although some people think...” “In this quote, it shows ...”). However, the writer needs to further develop his/her conclusion to effectively summarize the argument presented.</p>	<p>Once students master primary traits from W.6.1, they can work on connecting ideas and crafting more effective conclusions.</p>
<p><b>Secondary Trait:</b> Demonstrates the use of standard English, focusing on capitalization and spelling when writing. (Score Point 3)</p>	<p>The writer consistently uses standard English, particularly in the area of capitalization and spelling. Although there are minor punctuation and grammatical errors in the essay, these errors do not hinder the reader’s comprehension.</p>	

## Grade 6 English Language Arts: The Role of Technology in Education Annotated Student Work

### Level 2 Student Work

Technology should be expansive in education. Expansive means to increase to a larger amount. In the Steve Jobs articles, Rupert Murdoch agrees that technology should be expansive in education. Technology could help kids in the classroom. It could help kids and teachers learn using something that was made when the kids were born, giving students a way to learn in a way that they're used to at home in the classroom. In the Steve Jobs article, Rupert Murdoch says "We need to take what is working so well outside the classroom and use it to shake up the classroom."

Technology can also help kids with disabilities learn. It could give special kids a way to learn in a way they understand. For example, they understand. For example, in the Steve Jobs article, Rupert Murdoch said "Shortly after Steve Jobs died, the mom of a 3 year old posted a note about how her iPad allowed her autistic son- doesn't talk-to find his voice."

If technology was more expansive in education as much as other industries, then education could be revolutionized. Learning could be expanded to teach all kids and others with technology.

**Comment [jd13]:** Student introduces a claim for an expansive role of technology in education. However, he/she fails to clearly organize reasons to support his/her case later. (W.6.1.a)

**Comment [A14]:** Student supports claim with a clear reason, demonstrating an understanding of the topic. (W.6.1.b)

**Comment [jd15]:** Cites textual evidence to provide relevant evidence from one article read. However, little inference is drawn. Does not clarify the relationship between claim and evidence. (RI.6.1, W.6.1.c)

**Comment [jd16]:** A second reason for an expansive role of technology in education is provided. (W.6.1.a,b,c)

**Comment [jd17]:** Cites evidence from the article that supports the reason identified at the beginning of the paragraph. However, does not clarify the relationship between the reason and evidence. (RI.6.1, W.6.1c)

**Comment [jd18]:** Concluding statement is provided, yet it is not well developed and does not follow from the argument presented. (W.6.1e)

This student work provides an example of score point 2 on the primary-trait rubric.

Criterion and Score Point	Evidence	Instructional Next Steps
<p><b>Primary Trait:</b> Argument that includes clear claim with relevant reasons and evidence.</p> <p>(Score Point 2)</p>	<p>The essay establishes a clear claim in the first paragraph (e.g., "Technology should be expansive in education"). The writer gives reasons and evidence throughout the text that support the claim. However, the writer uses few ideas. Evidence is cited from only one of the articles read and discussed ("What Would Jobs Do?"). The writer does not build upon his/her ideas by elaborating beyond the articles to support the claim. This indicates a lack of understanding of the task.</p>	<p>Instructional next steps would include working with this writer to explain the underlying assumptions in their reasoning in order to better explain how their claims support their argument.</p> <p>Additional next steps could include supporting the writer with tracing and evaluating an argument in a model essay. He/she could identify the parts of the essay that contain the argument, claim, reasons, and supporting/connecting evidence.</p>
<p><b>Secondary Trait:</b> Includes clear introduction, connecting words and phrases, and a concluding sentence or section, and maintains a formal style.</p> <p>(Score Point 2)</p>	<p>The essay includes a limited introduction. There are no transitional words or phrases that help clarify relationships among ideas. The concluding statement follows the introduction but is not developed.</p>	
<p><b>Secondary Trait:</b> Demonstrates the use of standard English, focusing on capitalization and spelling when writing.</p> <p>(Score Point 4)</p>	<p>The writer uses standard English as it pertains to the proper use of capitalization and spelling. There is only one error in the text. This error does not impede the reader's understanding of the text.</p>	

## Grade 6 English Language Arts: The Role of Technology in Education Annotated Student Work

### Level 1 Student Work

Technology should be expanded not limited in Education. Expansive refers to increasing to a large Amount. However limited is to reduce to a small amount. In the Steve Jobs Article he says, “More Than a million Students A year that spend every school day drop out of high school.”

**Comment [I19]:** Student introduces a claim. (W.6.1)

People need to expansive technology in class. Kids are eager to learn and quick to embrace new technology. In the Steve Jobs Article he says, “We must approach education the way jobs approach every industry he touched to be willing to blow up what doesn’t work or gets in the way.” This means teacher must approach student with education. Industry means for steady effort.

**Comment [I20]:** Student offers support of the claim, but reason and relevance is unclear. (W.6.1b)

**Comment [I21]:** Supports claim with unrelated evidence, as Jobs quote does not relate to the idea of how “kids embrace new technology.” (W.6.1b)

There’s no limit to what he or she can learn. There use to be limited technology now it expanded, with the right technology they can do the same for education. In the middle, too many children float from grade to grade in school never challenge them. This means kids never challenge themselves for better understanding.

**Comment [A22]:** Citation of the text does not support student’s analysis of what the text says explicitly. This sentence could reflect student’s confusion over the meaning of the text. (W.RI.6.1) [\*\*\*\*\*IN THIS COMMENT, NOT CLEAR WHICH STANDARD IS INTENDED—RI or W. Also, comments are marked “lan” 1-3, and “Administrator” 4-6 and “jdragoo” below—OK? \*\*\*\*]

Technology should increase to a larger Amount, not Reduce to a small Amount.

**Comment [A23]:** Student uses language directly from the text without quotations and without demonstrating understanding of the topic/ text. (W.6.1b)

**Comment [A24]:** Student provides a concluding statement. (W.6.1e)

This student work provides an example of score point 1 on the primary-trait rubric.

Criterion and Score Point	Evidence	Instructional Next Steps
<p><b>Primary Trait:</b> Argument that includes clear claim with relevant reasons and evidence.  (Score Point 1)</p>	<p>The essay establishes a claim in the first paragraph of the essay. Evidence is cited from only one text, but it reflects a lack of understanding of the text. The claim is not supported with relevant evidence from the texts read. The third paragraph introduces additional claims that are not supported with evidence.</p>	<p>This student has difficulty making and supporting a claim on the topic because she/he may struggle to understand the ideas in the provided texts. This could be due to a need to expand her/his academic vocabulary and language structures. Next steps could include pre-teaching key vocabulary and instruction on identifying main idea and supporting details in texts that are at her/his reading level. When student demonstrates competence with the literacy concepts (main idea, argument, claim) with lower level texts, she/he may be able to apply those skills to the more demanding grade level texts.</p>
<p><b>Secondary Trait:</b> Demonstrates the use of standard English, focusing on capitalization and spelling when writing.  (Score Point 2)</p>	<p>The writer uses standard English, as it pertains to spelling. There is limited use of standard English as it pertains to capitalization. Several capitalization errors appear throughout the text causing slight confusion for the reader.</p>	<p>In order to prioritize and not overwhelm the student, it is recommended that she/he work on the primary trait required for the essay before tackling secondary traits.</p>



# GRADE 6 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION

## INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORTS

The instructional supports on the following pages include the following items:

- 1) A unit outline with essential questions, enduring understandings, and formative assessments. The unit outline format was informed by Wiggins and McTighe's *Understanding By Design*.
- 2) Complete instructions for Formative Assessments 1 and 2
- 3) A Text and Tasks Set with sample text-dependent questions.

Teachers may use these resources as they are described, integrate parts into a currently existing curriculum unit, or use as a model or checklist for a currently existing unit on a different topic.

# Unit Outline – Grade 6 English Language Arts

**INTRODUCTION:** This unit outline provides an example of how to integrate performance tasks into a unit. *Teachers may (a) use this unit outline as it is described below; (b) integrate parts of it into a currently existing curriculum unit; or (c) use it as a model or checklist for a currently existing unit on a different topic. The length of the unit includes suggested time spent on the classroom instruction of lessons and administration of assessments. Please note that this framework does not include individual lessons.*

## Grade 6 ELA: The Role of Technology in Education

### UNIT TOPIC AND LENGTH:

This unit uses the topic of technology in education as a means to teach students how to analyze and navigate informational texts. As a part of the unit, students will read four informational texts on the subject of technology in education and complete assessment tasks. Prior to the final assessment, students complete two formative reading tasks that build in complexity and are sequenced to scaffold student learning for the culminating assessment, in which students write an argumentative essay. It is important to note that writing arguments, with claims and evidence, is introduced in writing anchor standard 1 of the Common Core standards for the first time in 6th grade. Thus, for many students, this may be their first attempt to independently write a formal argument.

### COMMON CORE LEARNING STANDARDS:

#### Formative Assessments

- **RI.6.1:** Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- **RI.6.2:** 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.
- **RI.6.6:** Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.

#### Culminating Performance Task

- **W.6.1:** Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
  - a. Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly.
  - b. Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
  - c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons.
  - d. Establish and maintain a formal style.
  - e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.
- **L.6.2:** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
  - a. Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.
  - b. Spell correctly.

<p><b>BIG IDEAS/ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Technology has an impact on the ways students learn in the classroom.</li> <li>➤ Writers can teach us about technology through informational texts.</li> <li>➤ Readers use strategies to effectively extract information from texts.</li> <li>➤ An author’s methods and choices impact the effectiveness of an argument.</li> <li>➤ What misunderstandings are predictable?</li> </ul>	<p><b>ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ What is the value of technology in education?</li> <li>➤ How can we identify and analyze arguments?</li> <li>➤ What do authors do to develop an argument?</li> <li>➤ How does a writer’s point of view impact their arguments in informational texts?</li> <li>➤ How can we build and support an argument?</li> </ul>
<p><b>CONTENT:</b></p> <p>Informational Text Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Informational text structure</li> <li>➤ Identifying key ideas, issues and claims</li> <li>➤ Arguments</li> <li>➤ Paraphrasing</li> <li>➤ Summarizing</li> <li>➤ Point of view</li> <li>➤ Process of drawing conclusions and making inferences from text</li> <li>➤ Connotative and technical meanings</li> <li>➤ Connection between word choice and tone and/or meaning</li> </ul>	<p><b>SKILLS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Write in an argumentative text structure</li> <li>➤ Introduce a claim</li> <li>➤ Develop a logical argument with relevant research, quotes, statistics/data, and anecdotes</li> <li>➤ Cite textual evidence to support written responses</li> <li>➤ Clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts using transitions</li> <li>➤ Use quotation marks properly to cite direct quotes</li> <li>➤ Revise for consistent third person point of view</li> <li>➤ Edit for capitalization, spelling and punctuation</li> </ul>
<p>Informational Text Writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Informational text structure and format</li> <li>➤ Transitional words and phrases</li> <li>➤ Textual evidence</li> <li>➤ Claims and arguments</li> <li>➤ Conventions of standard English, focusing on capitalization, spelling and punctuation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Define technology</li> <li>➤ Compare and contrast technology in the 20th and 21st centuries</li> <li>➤ Describe technology’s role in education</li> <li>➤ Analyze the impact of technology in education</li> <li>➤ Evaluate the pros and cons of the role of technology in the classroom</li> </ul>
<p>Technology in Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Evolving role of technology</li> <li>➤ The goal and purpose of education</li> <li>➤ Social networking: advantages and disadvantages</li> </ul>	

- Steve Jobs and his contributions to technology
- Waldorf Education and its principles

**VOCABULARY/KEY TERMS:**

DOMAIN-SPECIFIC: Technology, education, social networking

ACADEMIC: Arguments, claims, compel, significance, paraphrasing, evidence, legitimate, illogical, critical, objective, interpret, biased, neutral

**ASSESSMENT EVIDENCE AND ACTIVITIES:**

**INITIAL ASSESSMENT :**

Some teachers may need to assess students’ background knowledge of technology in education and argument writing. As an initial assessment, they could ask students to argue in favor of purchasing new computers or library books for the classroom. This will help identify the starting point of students in the class.

**FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS:**

**SUMMARIZING CENTRAL IDEAS**

This assessment task asks students to write a brief summary of Rupert Murdoch’s article “What Would Jobs Do?” This summary should be distinct from personal opinions and/or judgments and focus on the central ideas the author outlined in the article. *Please see Task 1 for the exact prompt and full details on this task.*

**TRACING AN AUTHOR’S ARGUMENT**

To assess students’ ability to trace an author’s argument, students are asked to reread the article “Twitter in the Classroom” by John Calhoun and to identify the author’s claim and supporting reasons embedded within the text. *Please see Task 2 for the exact prompt and full details on this task.*

**FINAL PERFORMANCE TASK:**

The final task assesses students’ ability to write an essay in which they argue for either a limited or expansive role of technology in education, citing relevant evidence from at least two of the resources discussed in the unit. Students must be able to introduce their claim, develop an argument, and cite textual evidence that most strongly supports their claim. *Please see Task 3 for the exact prompt and full details on this task.*

## LEARNING PLAN & ACTIVITIES:

The following learning plan contains a series of learning activities to use throughout the unit building toward the final performance task. Within the learning plan, there are call-out boxes that provide suggestions for students who need extra support. These suggestions are based on student need and might be helpful for English Language Learners (ELLs), Students with Disabilities (SWDs), as well as other students who need support with particular aspects of the content and skills taught. For more ideas on how to support [ELLs](#) and [SWDs](#), visit the “About the Tasks” section of the Common Core Library.

### Suggested Activities

Following this learning plan is a Text and Tasks Set with sample text-dependent questions.

**Additional Support Strategies:** Most of the suggested texts in this unit are above grade level. Consider using **multimedia/video resources** to support student understanding of these texts at the beginning of the unit. Also consider using read-alouds and chunking portions of the text to support student understanding.

There is also a high volume of academic and domain-specific vocabulary, so there should be extra support for vocabulary study throughout the unit for all learners. For students who need support, use frontloading strategies. For example: provide language objectives and sentence starters, foldables, visual glossaries, and tiered graphic organizers for new vocabulary.

As part of this unit, consider pairing portions of a text (such as “A Silicon Valley School that Doesn’t Compute” by Matt Richtel) with different reading strategies. To help students navigate this complex text, allocate time to read the text with the students. During the class reading, consider modeling the following reading strategies to assist in students’ reading comprehension:

- Provide opportunities for students to read key portions of the text multiple times.
- Read difficult portions of the text aloud, as students follow along.
- Chunk the text into sections and have students discuss the “gist” of each section to guide them in self-assessing their understanding of key or difficult sections of text.
- Work with academic vocabulary in the form of both direct instruction (develop students’ ability to navigate a dictionary) and small group activities to develop students’ ability to determine meaning from context in the text
- Guide students in summarizing and/or paraphrasing the author’s central ideas throughout the text.

### **Graphic Organizers:**

Using a **Paraphrasing Chart** is an instructional activity that assists students in developing a framework and actively engages students in constructing meaning from the text.

*Sample:*

<i>Notes from Original Source</i>	<i>My Paraphrase</i>
<i>My Thoughts</i>	

This strategy helps students question the text and to turn it into their own words to aid in their overall understanding. The basic instructional activity consists of three parts.

1. First, readers identify key ideas and/or quotes within the text.
2. Second, the readers think about the meaning of the text. What is the author trying to tell the audience? They restate the author's main points in their own words.
3. Finally, the readers write what these ideas make them think about—how does this connect to their opinions about technology in the classroom?

### **What is a claim?**

Students may view a PowerPoint presentation instructing them on essential qualities of a claim (e.g., strong opinion statement written in third person, topic specific, needs to be explained/supported with reasons and evidence, etc.).

Based on this presentation, ask students to locate and define examples of claims in the texts provided. Students work in groups of four to six to identify which of the claims are better than others (i.e. claims in which there are clear supporting reasons with convincing evidence). Students present and justify answers to class.

Students then choose the claim they feel was the best and a summary of the reasons/evidence they heard or presented. Students then post what they've written on chart paper.

### **Gallery Walk**

In this instructional activity, groups of students rotate around the classroom reflecting upon the claims and evidence posted on the charts.

Students may work in groups to analyze the various pieces of evidence that each author uses to support his/her claim. Each group focuses on identifying a particular type of evidence (i.e., statistics, quotes, anecdotes, etc.). Next, they explain how the given evidence supports the author's claim. Finally, students rotate around the classroom to view each group's findings and give valuable feedback on the process.

### **Additional Support Strategies:**

For students still struggling with identifying claims and their reasons/evidence, pair them with a student who has a better grasp of these literacy concepts and have them co-author a chart for the Gallery Walk. Or have the entire class prepare the charts in groups no larger than two or three before conducting the gallery walk so that students can share ideas and no individual student is on the hot seat.

### **Developing a Strong Opinion or Claim**

Once students have analyzed the various texts and charts and determined the authors' claims and supporting evidence, they need to develop their own claims that they will write and support in the final assessment task. Ask students to state their argument in a concise sentence and then think through both the reasons that support their argument and the evidence from the text that supports their reasons. Students can use a graphic organizer as an outline for their writing assignment.

### **Additional Supports Strategies:**

Information is more accessible and likely to be assimilated by learners when it is presented in a way that primes, activates, or provides prerequisite knowledge.

For example, teachers can familiarize students with key vocabulary and new concepts prior to reading. These activities can also be used to assess student knowledge that may be necessary for success with reading comprehension. Once student prior knowledge is assessed, instructional activities can be adjusted to respond to student gaps or needs.

#### Examples:

- Anchor instruction by linking to and activating relevant prior knowledge (e.g., using visual imagery and/or anticipation guides).
- Have students create a foldable for new concepts and vocabulary.
- Provide students with a visual glossary of key terms.
- Give explicit prompts for each step in a sequential process.
- Provide options for presenting and organizing information.
- Provide tiered graphic organizers to support students in identifying key ideas within a text as well as within their writing.

### **RESOURCES: RESOURCES:**

#### **Central Texts**

- “A Silicon Valley School that Doesn’t Compute” by Matt Richtel (*New York Times*, October 22, 2011)  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/23/technology/at-waldorf-school-in-silicon-valley-technology-can-wait.html?pagewanted=all>
- “The Purpose of Education” by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (*Maroon Tiger*, January-February, 1947)  
[http://mlkpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/documentsentry/doc\\_470200\\_000/](http://mlkpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/documentsentry/doc_470200_000/)
- “What Would Jobs Do?: Technology & Schools that Work” by Rupert Murdoch (*New York Post*, October 17, 2011)  
[http://www.nypost.com/p/news/opinion/opedcolumnists/what\\_would\\_jobs\\_do\\_SeJNmLMhG6euhtsgIeXhGP](http://www.nypost.com/p/news/opinion/opedcolumnists/what_would_jobs_do_SeJNmLMhG6euhtsgIeXhGP)
- “Twitter in the Classroom” by John Calhoun (Tech-Nation, December 3, 2010)  
<http://56wrtg1150.wikidot.com/twitter-in-the-classroom>

#### **Supplemental Texts:**

- “Will Textbook-Laden Backpacks Be a Memory?” by Bill Stamatias (*New York Teacher*, November 24, 2011)  
<http://www.uft.org/linking-learning/will-textbook-laden-backpacks-be-memory>
- “Waldorf Education in Public Schools” by Laura Pappano (*Harvard Education Letter*, Volume 27, Number 6, November/December 2011)  
<http://www.hepg.org/hel/article/515>

**Multimedia/ Videos:**

- “The Waldorf Way” (NBC Daily Nightly, November 30, 2011):  
<http://dailynightly.msnbc.msn.com/news/2011/11/30/9118340-the-waldorf-way-silicon-valley-school-eschews-technology>
- “Twitter has place in classrooms” (CNN, June 9, 2011):  
<http://cnn.com/video/data/2.0/video/tech/2011/06/09/simon.twitter.classroom.cnn.html>



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**English Language Arts Performance-Based Assessment (PBA)**

**Unit: The Role of Technology in Education**

**Task 2 (Formative Assessment)**

**TASK:** Using the following graphic organizer, identify one claim you find most significant to John Calhoun’s argument in the article “Twitter in the Classroom.”

On the left side of the chart, write the claim found within the article. Next, identify two reasons with evidence the author uses to support this claim. Last, list the paragraph(s) where you found the claim and reasons/evidence.

<b>Title of the Article: “Twitter in the Classroom” Author: John Calhoun</b>		
<b>CLAIMS</b>	<b>REASONS/ EVIDENCE</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
1.	1.	
	2.	

Grade 6: Literacy PBA 2, RI.6.1, RI.6.6

# Text and Tasks Set

## ARGUMENT WRITING THROUGH THE ANALYSIS OF INFORMATIONAL TEXT

### Overarching Questions:

What does 21st century education look like?  
 How do we identify and analyze an argument?  
 How does a writer’s point of view affect their arguments in a persuasive text?  
 How can we build and support an argument?

<b>Build Conceptual Understanding</b>	<b>Text 1:</b> “The Purpose of Education” by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.	<b>Text 2:</b> “What Would Jobs Do?:Technology & Schools that Work” by Rupert Murdoch	<b>Text 3:</b> “A Silicon Valley School that Doesn’t Compute” by Matt Richtel	<b>Text 4:</b> “Twitter in the Classroom” by John Calhoun
<p><b>O.1 Access Prior Knowledge:</b> What does education in the 21st century look like?</p> <p><b>Bridge to Texts:</b> How do various authors describe this new era of education?</p>	<p><b>1.1 Prior Knowledge &amp; Build Background:</b> Who is Martin Luther King, Jr.? What do you know about him and his vision?</p> <p><b>1.2 Comprehension:</b> What is Dr. King discussing in this article? Who is his audience? What does he want them to know?</p> <p><b>1.3 Significant Moments:</b> Select and explain the moment that reveals the most about Dr. King’s idea of education.</p> <p><b>1.4 Interpretation:</b> What was the purpose of Dr. King’s reference to Eugene Talmadge? What is the purpose of education according to MLK?</p> <p><b>1.5 Analysis:</b> What is Dr. King’s claim? How is it conveyed in the article?</p>	<p><b>2.1 Prior Knowledge &amp; Build Background:</b> Who is Steve Jobs? What were some of his contributions?</p> <p><b>2.2 Comprehension:</b> Who is the writer’s audience? What is he saying about education &amp; technology?  <b>Assessment Task #1:</b> Write a summary of Rupert Murdoch’s article. <b>(RI.6.1, RI.6.2)</b></p> <p><b>2.3 Interpretation:</b> What is Murdoch’s purpose for writing this article? What is the purpose of the quote, “We must approach education the way Jobs approached every industry he touched”?</p> <p><b>2.4 Analysis:</b> Why does the writer compare the classroom to the real world? How does the writer build and support his claim?</p> <p><b>2.5 Drawing Inferences:</b> What do you think is Murdoch’s main goal for writing this article? What do you think he is saying about the purpose of education? How does technology support that purpose?</p>	<p><b>3.1 Comprehension:</b> Describe the school that Matt Richtel is highlighting in the article. Identify three activities that students and teachers participate in at Waldorf School.</p> <p><b>3.2 Interpretation:</b> What is Richtel’s argument about education and technology? What do you think he is saying about the purpose of education? How does his discussion of technology support his argument?</p> <p><b>3.3 Analysis:</b> Compare &amp; contrast the Waldorf School to the schools that Rupert Murdoch describes in the previous article.</p> <p><b>3.4 Analysis:</b> Evaluate the validity of Richtel’s claim. Do his arguments support his claim? <i>Identify two arguments that you find are significant to the author’s claim and explain how he supports this argument.</i></p>	<p><b>4.1 Comprehension:</b> What is Twitter? How is it used? What are PLCs? How does Twitter affect PLCs?</p> <p><b>4.2 Interpretation:</b> What is the argument the author is making?</p> <p><b>4.3 Drawing an Inference:</b> Compare the use of Hotseat at the college level with its potential use in middle and elementary schools. Would the technology have the same success in the middle schools/ elementary schools?</p> <p><b>4.4 Analysis:</b> Based on info from all four articles, do you think Twitter is more beneficial for educators or for students?</p> <p><b>Assessment Task #2:</b> Using the following graphic organizer, identify one claim you find most significant to John Calhoun’s argument in the article “Twitter in the Classroom.” <b>(RI.6.1, RI.6.6)</b></p>
<p><b>Culminating Task:</b> Write an essay in which you argue for either a limited or expansive role of technology in education. Support your claims with clear reasons and evidence, citing evidence from at least two of the articles read and discussed during the unit. Use your own language but be sure to analyze what the authors say and not your opinion on the topic.                  Your essay should be written in a formal style, for an audience that is familiar with the articles. Be sure to introduce your claim and organize the reasons and evidence clearly. End your essay with a conclusion that follows from the argument presented. Additionally, it should follow the conventions of standard English, including capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. <b>(W.6.1, L.6.2)</b></p>				



# GRADE 6 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS: THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION

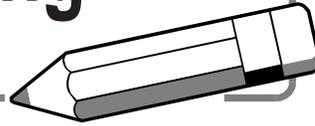
## ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORTS

The following additional supports include suggestions on how to guide students with paraphrasing and quoting evidence.

## Paraphrasing



# Paraphrasing



### Learning the Strategy

When you paraphrase something you have read, you simply restate the text using different words. Putting the text in your own words can help you better understand and remember what you've read. It is especially good for reading graphics, essays, poems, and difficult text in any subject.

### Practicing the Strategy

1. Preview your text first. Surveying and skimming will help you identify the main ideas from your reading. Look first for any headings, pictures, bold-face key words, or captions; then skim the text for details that relate to the questions below. Ask yourself these questions:
  - What is this graphic or text about?
  - What clues give meaning to the text or the main idea of the reading?
  - What details or facts stand out in the text or support the main idea?

Remember, right now, you are only trying to get an overview of the content.

2. As you read, make notes in the margins around the text or on sticky notes. Focus on text that is hard to read or difficult to understand. Write down any thoughts or questions you have. And be sure to look up any unknown words using your dictionary to discover their meanings.
3. At the end of each section or paragraph
  - Use the paraphrasing chart to write the main idea and important details.
  - Write one or two sentences paraphrasing this idea or concept.
  - Write your personal thoughts about the concept relating to what you already know or have experienced.
4. Repeat this process with each paragraph until you have finished reading the text.

## Paraphrasing



### Paraphrasing Writing Steps

- Step 1** Write the main idea or important details.
  
- Step 2** Write one or two sentences paraphrasing the idea or concept.
  
- Step 3** Write thoughts about the concept related to prior knowledge, personal experiences, new insights, questions about the main idea, etc.

# Paraphrasing



## Paraphrasing Chart

Paragraphs/Lines/Subheadings:	My Paraphrase:
My Thoughts:	

Paragraphs/Lines/Subheadings:	My Paraphrase:
My Thoughts:	

Paragraphs/Lines/Subheadings:	My Paraphrase:
My Thoughts:	

t my local store.