



# 6<sup>th</sup> Grade English

## Curriculum Sample

A Grade Ahead's rigorous, year-round English enrichment program is designed to challenge your child to a higher academic standard. Our monthly curriculum includes topics that your child will see in his or her English or Language Arts classes. Your child will build grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing skills and develop strong critical thinking and analytical skills.

Each week will have an in-depth lesson (which we call Examples), homework, and answers. In these next pages, we offer a closer look at what our Examples, homework, and answers offer as well as a specific example of each.

**Examples - Grade 6**

**Word List 3**

1. fierce	(adj.)	intense; aggressive; ferocious
2. flourish	(n.)	a dramatic addition; a fancy way to thrive
3. heap	(n.)	a large pile
4. resolve	(v.)	to decide; to solve
5. slacken	(v.)	to slow; to loosen
6. strike	(v.)	to hit; to ignite; to discover
7. tear	(v.)	to move forcefully or swiftly
8. tremble	(v.)	to shake

**B. Comprehension**

**Realistic Fiction Review**

Realistic fiction is storytelling based on real life but with embellishments. Realistic-seeming people, places, or events can occur within stories, but they should not be retellings of actual historical events. Many authors write realistic fiction to entertain their readers or to make a point about life. You will find that most fiction is realistic fiction, as it is the most popular form of storytelling. The length of the story doesn't matter, as long as it involves events and characters that could exist. Stories with characters such as talking animals, fairies, and monsters are not examples of realistic fiction.

**Context Clues**

**Teaching Tip:** Use the vocabulary words to make sentences containing the different types of context clues: synonyms, antonyms, explanations, and examples.

Sometimes when we have trouble determining the meaning of a certain word in a sentence, we use context clues to help guide us.

Context Clues: A B C

## Student Goals

Student goals are listed at the top right of the Examples each week. These are topics that your child should understand by the end of the week.



Lesson pages are titled "Examples - Grade 6," answer pages are titled "Answers - Grade 6," and homework pages are simply titled "Grade - 6."

Examples - Grade 6

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**1. Synonyms** - If you aren't sure of a meaning of a word, look for another word or phrase in the sentence that may mean something similar.

**Example [unfamiliar word is underlined]:**

My aspiration to run a marathon is at the top of my list of goals for this year.

We can infer that "goal" is a synonym for "aspiration". The sentence states that running a marathon (the "aspiration") is on the top of a list of other goals.

**2. Antonyms** - If a sentence suggests change or conflict, look for words that may have opposite meanings.

**Example [unfamiliar word is underlined]:**

The students ostracized the substitute at the beginning of the day, but by the end of the day, they were participating and respecting her.

**Student Goals:**

- I will be able to define and use all vocabulary words correctly.
- I will be able to determine the meaning of words by how they are used in a sentence.
- I will be able to demonstrate a proper use of verbs in present, past, and future tenses.

## Vocabulary Word List

Your child will receive a vocabulary list for the week. Depending on the grade level, these words may be words that are difficult to spell, or they may not know the meaning of the word yet.

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**Example [unfamiliar word is underlined]:**

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**Context clues** are sentences, phrases, or words that help someone understand the meaning of an unfamiliar sentence, phrase, or word.

## Teaching Tip

Teaching tips are suggestions to help you or your teacher present the topic to your child. These could include topics to review first or even an activity to do with your child.

# ABC Word Boxes

These word boxes define terms used within the lesson that your child may not know.

...storytelling based on real life but with embellishments. Realistic-seeming events can occur within stories, but they should not be retellings of actual historical events. Writers write realistic fiction to entertain their readers or to make a point about life. You will find realistic fiction is the most popular form of storytelling. The length of the story can vary, as long as it involves events and characters that could exist. Stories with characters such as talking animals, faeries, and monsters are not examples of realistic fiction.

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1

Grade 6

**Examples - Grade 6**

In this example, the word "but" implies a change in feeling. Therefore, we might guess "ostracized" means to "exclude" or "disrespect" out of dislike.

**Explanations** – If the word is followed by a description, the additional information may serve as an explanation.

 **Example [unfamiliar word is underlined]:**

My dress was brightly colored and covered with unpleasantly shiny beads; it was too gaudy to wear to the party.

We can infer by the explanation of the dress that "gaudy" means very brightly colored or unpleasantly decorated.

**Examples** – If you have heard or seen the word in other places, use that knowledge to determine a unified idea of the word.

 **Example [unfamiliar word is underlined]:**

The conversation became somber when we began discussing the death of our friend's father.

In this example, we can infer that "somber" means something serious. We can infer this because the death of a person is an example we can pull from our knowledge as something that brings a serious tone to a conversation.

 **Note:** This month, students will be reading excerpts from *The Railway Children*, by E. Nesbit. Some of the vocabulary will be covered in exercises, but some might be unfamiliar and require assistance; however, students should always be encouraged to use context clues to decipher meanings of unfamiliar words. Not every word is crucial to understanding the overall meaning of a text.

**Grammar**

For each type of verb and verb tense, have the students write a sentence of their own. Be sure to check that they are using the correct verb form.

# Examples

To illustrate the topic, examples are provided to you and your child. These examples help demonstrate how to solve the problem or figure out the answer.



Each day's homework usually takes about 30 minutes to complete.

Grade - 6

Start Time: \_\_\_\_\_ End Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Vocabulary Score: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Grammar Score: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Comprehension Score: \_\_\_\_\_

**A. Vocabulary – Fill in the blanks with the correct vocabulary word from the word bank. Words may change form.**

fierce	furious	heap	resolve
slacken	strike	tear	tremble

- The power went out, please \_\_\_\_\_ a match so that we can light these candles.
- I can tell that you haven't cleaned your room in weeks because of the \_\_\_\_\_ of clothes on the floor.
- Marie \_\_\_\_\_ to study harder next year so that she could improve her grades and join the volleyball team.
- The \_\_\_\_\_ lion stalked its prey on the savannah.
- Susan had always been dramatic, and she demonstrated this every time she signed her name with a \_\_\_\_\_.
- As Amelia drifted off to sleep, the grip she had on the book she'd been reading \_\_\_\_\_.
- As the child came \_\_\_\_\_ around the corner, he nearly knocked the priceless vase off of the coffee table.
- I knew Samantha was cold because I could see her \_\_\_\_\_ underneath the five layers of her coat.

Use four of the vocabulary words from above and use each in a sentence that is at least \_\_\_\_\_ length. Words may change their parts of speech.

## Homework

Each week, four days of homework are given to apply concepts from that week's lesson and reinforce the topic.

Answers - Grade 6

**Week: 3 - Day 1**

**A. Vocabulary**

1. strike	2. heaps / heap
3. resolved	4. fierce
5. furious	6. slackened
7. tearing	8. trembling / tremble

For numbers 9-12, sentences will vary. Check to make sure that each sentence correctly uses a vocabulary word and contains at least eight words. In the examples, vocabulary words are underlined.

- I resolved to go to the gym every morning before work in order to train for the marathon.
- As she opened the oil and creaky door, she began to tremble from fright.
- The sled came tearing down the hill and almost barreled into the kids waiting at the bottom.
- My sister becomes fierce at the beginning of each one of her competitions.

**B. Grammar**

1. woke	2. come
3. sink	4. rode
5. run	6. fell
7. fought	8. found
9. fly	10. stole
11. beaten	12. break
13. did	14. green
15. adjective	16. verb
17. verb	18. adjective
19. verb	20. adjective
21. verb	22. attempted
23. will eat	24. think
25. hid	26. takes

**C. Comprehension**

For numbers 2-4 even, underlined portions may vary slightly. An example is given.

1. d	2. top leaders
3. a	4. submerged under water
5. b	6. always offered cookies and lemonade
7. c	8. changing colors of trees' leaves...occurs every year

## Answers

Answers are provided to check your child's homework. Enter the scores into the Parent Portal to track progress and note which areas may need more work.

**A. Word List 1**

- |                    |        |  |
|--------------------|--------|--|
| 1. <b>absently</b> | (adv.) | in a way showing lack of thought; not attentively              |
| 2. <b>dull</b>     | (adj.) | boring; not sharp  |
| 3. <b>engage</b>   | (v.)   | to hire; to capture (as in attention)                          |
| 4. <b>fetch</b>    | (v.)   | to get and bring back; to bring back a certain amount of money |
| 5. <b>hearth</b>   | (n.)   | the floor area around a fireplace                              |
| 6. <b>linger</b>   | (v.)   | to remain over time  |
| 7. <b>pace</b>     | (n.)   | the speed at which something is done; a step                   |
| 8. <b>unjust</b>   | (adj.) | not fair   |

**Student Goals:**

- ✓ I will be able to define and use all the vocabulary words correctly.
- ✓ I will be able to recognize realistic fiction and explain its characteristics.
- ✓ I will be able to answer comprehension questions by understanding the passage and by using details from the passage to support my answer.

**B. Comprehension**

**Realistic Fiction**

Realistic fiction is storytelling based on real life but with embellishments. Realistic people, places, or events can occur within the story, but they are not based on actual historical events. Many authors write realistic fiction to entertain their readers or to make a point about life. You will find that most fiction is realistic fiction, as it is the most popular form of storytelling. The length of the story doesn't matter as long as it involves events and characters that could exist.



**Example:** Which of these plots is an example of realistic fiction?

- When Tom turns 8 years old, he receives the bicycle of his dreams and proceeds to spend the entire summer riding around the neighborhood with his best friends.
- When Tom turns 8 years old, he receives a flying bicycle and proceeds to spend the entire summer flying around the neighborhood with all of the other little vampires.

Plot 1 is realistic fiction. Although both are imaginary accounts of Tom, Plot 1 gives events that could be possible in real life. Flying bicycles and vampires, on the other hand, go beyond what we know to exist, so plot 2 could not be considered realistic fiction.

Some popular examples of realistic fiction include S.E. Hinton's *The Outsiders*, Jerry Spinelli's *Maniac Magee*, and *Holes* by Louis Sacher.



**Teaching Tip:** Discuss books the students have read to determine whether or not they are examples of realistic fiction.



Remember, **context clues** are words or phrases that help you figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases.

**Passage-Based Questions**

The goal of questions that are based on a passage is to check for understanding. There are several types of questions you might encounter after reading a passage.

- Definition Questions:** Definition questions will ask you to determine the meaning of a word in the passage. You can do this by looking for *context clues*. Look for these clues in the sentence or sentences around the unfamiliar words.



**Example:** Read the following excerpt from *Peter Pan* by J.M. Barrie. It explains how Mr. Darling managed to marry Mrs. Darling.

The way Mr. Darling won her was this: the many gentlemen who had been boys when she was a girl discovered *simultaneously* that they loved her, and they all ran to her house to propose to her except Mr. Darling, who took a cab and nipped in first, and so he got her.

**Example Question:** What is the meaning of *simultaneously* in the excerpt?

- A) sadly      B) slowly      C) at the same time      D) in a hurry

**Answer:** C

By using context clues, we see that all of the gentlemen went to her. Although the one who took a cab got there first, we can assume that everyone was headed to Mrs. Darling at the same time.

2. **Inference Questions:** Most comprehension questions will be asking you to *infer* something in some way. In order to infer something from a passage, you will need to look for the *implicit* information. Use implicit information and knowledge from your own life to determine the most logical answer.



**Example:** Read the following excerpt from Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

Miss Watson would say, "Don't put your feet up there, Huckleberry;" and "Don't scrunch up like that, Huckleberry—set up straight;" and pretty soon she would say, "Don't gap and stretch like that, Huckleberry—why don't you try to behave?" Then she told me all about the bad place, and I said I wished I was there. She got mad then, but I didn't mean no harm. All I wanted was to go somewheres; all I wanted was a change, I warn't particular. She said it was wicked to say what I said; said she wouldn't say it for the whole world; she was going to live so as to go to the good place. Well, I couldn't see no advantage in going where she was going, so I made up my mind I wouldn't try for it. But I never said so, because it would only make trouble, and wouldn't do no good.

**Example Question:** What type of woman is Miss Watson?

**Example Answer:** Miss Watson is an unmarried, strict, and religious. Her title shows that she is not married, and her constant pestering of Huckleberry to be still and behaved shows that she is firm with children. Additionally, her discussion of "the good place" refers to her belief in Heaven.

Notice that the passage does not directly state any of these characteristics, but they can be inferred by the author's use of *characterization*. For example, the passage does not state that Miss Watson is unmarried, but we can assume so from her title. We know that "Miss" is used for unmarried women. This is an example of using knowledge from real life to answer questions logically.



To **infer** is to determine something that is not directly stated.

Something that is **implicit** is not directly stated.



**Characterization** is the act of an author describing a character or characters either implicitly or *explicitly*.

To do something **explicitly** is to do it directly.

In general, when inferring information, you should pay attention to the following aspects of fiction:

- **characters** – the people, animals, or objects participating in a story
- **plot** – the events of the story
- **setting** – where and when the story takes place
- **conflict** – the main problem of the story

3. Opinion Questions: Some questions might ask your opinion on a topic related to the passage.

Refer to the excerpt from *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* on the previous page.



**Example:** Would you like living with Miss Watson? Why or why not? Explain your answer with details from the passage.

I would not want to live with Miss Watson because she is too strict. In the passage, Miss Watson is constantly nagging Huckleberry to sit up straight and behave.

Notice that this question asks your opinion about Miss Watson, but that it also asks you to support your answer with details from the excerpt to show that you understand Miss Watson's character and can defend your answer.

Looking at the example question above, we see a very common aspect of many comprehension questions: asking for support. Most comprehension questions will ask you to support your answer with details from the passage. This is very important. If you are able to support your answer, it shows that you have a complete understanding of the passage.

### Showing Support

A good tip for consistently showing support is to answer a question in two parts.

Part 1: Answer the question generally.

Part 2: Support your answer with details from the passage using a phrase like, "The passage states that" or "In the passage,".



**Example:** Would you like living with Miss Watson? Why or why not? Explain your answer with details from the passage.

**[Part 1 of the answer is underlined, and Part 2 of the answer is in italics.]:** I would not want to live with Miss Watson because she is too strict. *In the passage, Miss Watson is constantly nagging Huckleberry to sit up straight and behave.*

Notice that this part of the answer addresses the question without going into detail in Part 1, and then in Part 2, it takes details directly from the passage to support the answer.



*Note: Always find support from the passage. Although personal details might be interesting, if they are not found in the passage, you will not be showing a mastery of comprehension.*

To begin mastering comprehension, follow these steps while you read:

- ✓ **Read slowly and with purpose.** Try to understand what you are reading *while* you are reading it.
- ✓ **Keep mental notes of things you might find to be important.** It will help you locate answers quickly and more effectively later on.
- ✓ **Break down the passage into manageable parts.** At the end of each paragraph, quickly ask yourself what it was about.
- ✓ **Ask questions.** If you are unsure about something, ask your teacher or parent to help clarify.



*Note: This month, students will be reading excerpts from The Railway Children by E. Nesbit. Some of the vocabulary will be covered in exercises, but some might be unfamiliar and require assistance; however, students should always be encouraged to use context clues to decipher meanings of unfamiliar words. **Not every word is crucial to understanding the overall meaning of a text.***



**Teaching Tip:** *Reading through index questions with students before going through the passage can help focus their attention on certain details and is good practice for test taking.*



Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Start Time: \_\_\_\_\_ End Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Comprehension Score: \_\_\_\_/10  
 Vocabulary Score: \_\_\_\_/18

**A. Comprehension – Read the passage. The following passages are adapted from *The Railway Children* by E. Nesbit.**

**Chapter I. The beginning of things.**

They were not railway children to begin with. They were just ordinary suburban children, and they lived with their Father and Mother in an ordinary red-brick-fronted villa, with coloured glass in the front door, a tiled passage that was called a hall, a bath-room with hot and cold water, electric bells, French windows, and a good deal of white paint, and 'every modern convenience', as the house-agents say.



There were three of them. Roberta was the eldest. Of course, Mothers never have favourites, but if their Mother HAD had a favourite, it might have been Roberta. Next came Peter, who wished to be an Engineer when he grew up; and the youngest was Phyllis, who meant extremely well.

Mother did not spend all her time in paying dull calls to dull ladies, and sitting dully at home waiting for dull ladies to pay calls to her. She was almost always there, ready to play with the children, and read to them, and help them to do their home-lessons. Besides this, she used to write stories for them while they were at school, and read them aloud after tea, and she always made up funny pieces of poetry for their birthdays and for other great occasions, such as the christening of the new kittens, or the refurbishing of the doll's house, or the time when they were getting over the mumps.

These three lucky children always had everything they needed: pretty clothes, good fires, a lovely nursery with heaps of toys, and a Mother Goose wall-paper. They also had a Father who was just perfect—never cross, never unjust, and always ready for a game—at least, if at any time he was NOT ready, he always had an excellent reason for it, and explained the reason to the children so interestingly and funnily that they felt sure he couldn't help himself.

You will think that they ought to have been very happy. And so they were, but they did not know HOW happy till the pretty life in the Red Villa was over and done with, and they had to live a very different life indeed.

*The children's father has just come home from a business trip when two gentlemen come to the door. Father is gone longer than they expect. Finally, the maid (Ruth) asks their mother to join him.*

Then Mother went into the Library. There was more talking. Then the bell rang again, and Ruth fetched a cab. The children heard boots go out and down the steps. The cab drove away, and the front door shut. Then Mother came in. Her dear face was as white as her lace collar, and her eyes looked very big and shining.

"It's bedtime," she said. "Ruth will put you to bed."

"But you promised we should sit up late tonight because Father's come home," said Phyllis.

"Father's been called away—on business," said Mother. "Come, darlings, go at once."

They kissed her and went. Roberta lingered to give Mother an extra hug and to whisper:

"It wasn't bad news, Mammy, was it? Is anyone dead—or—"

"Nobody's dead—no," said Mother, and she almost seemed to push Roberta away. "I can't tell you anything tonight, my pet. Go, dear, go NOW."

So Roberta went.

Ruth brushed the girls' hair and helped them to undress. (Mother almost always did this herself.) When she had turned down the gas and left them she found Peter, still dressed, waiting on the stairs.

"I say, Ruth, what's up?" he asked.

"Don't ask me no questions and I won't tell you no lies," the red-headed Ruth replied. "You'll know soon enough."

Late that night Mother came up and kissed all three children as they lay asleep. But Roberta was the only one whom the kiss woke, and she lay mousey-still, and said nothing.

"If Mother doesn't want us to know she's been crying," she said to herself as she heard through the dark the catching of her Mother's breath, "we WON'T know it. That's all."

**Answer the questions about the passage.**

1. The children's house could be best described as...

- A) lacking                      B) run-down                      C) extravagant                      D) comfortable

2. Support your answer to question 1 with details from the passage.

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3-4. Describe Mother. Use details from the passage to support your answer.

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5. The following is an excerpt from the passage:

"...but they did not know HOW happy till the pretty life in the Red Villa was over and done with, and they had to live a very different life indeed."

From the excerpt, you can infer that the "different life" will be...

- A) better                      B) worse                      C) the same                      D) non-existent

6. Support your answer to question 5 with details from the passage.

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7. The following is an excerpt from the passage:

"I can't tell you anything tonight, *my pet*. Go, dear, go NOW."

What is the meaning of *my pet* in the excerpt?

- A) my dog                      B) my dear                      C) my servant                      D) my child

8. Support your answer to question 7 with details from the passage.

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9-10. Is this passage realistic fiction? Why or why not?

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**B. Vocabulary – Fill in the blanks with the correct vocabulary word from the word bank.**

absently	dull	engage	fetch
hearth	linger	pace	unjust

- Please don't \_\_\_\_\_ any longer; we are in a rush!
- The math class was so \_\_\_\_\_ that half of the students fell asleep.
- Most people believed that the verdict was \_\_\_\_\_, so they organized a protest.
- Please go \_\_\_\_\_ the newspaper so that we can look for summer jobs.
- During the cold winters, my favorite place to be is the warm \_\_\_\_\_.
- I have been running every day, and my \_\_\_\_\_ has improved; I am running a mile faster than ever.
- Susan \_\_\_\_\_ gazed out the window, bored by the homework in front of her.
- I was impressed that the visitor was able to \_\_\_\_\_ all of my students with his presentation!

**Match each vocabulary word to its near synonym.**

retrieve	remain	boring	fascinate
unfair	speed	thoughtlessly	fireside

- absently: \_\_\_\_\_
- dull: \_\_\_\_\_
- engage: \_\_\_\_\_
- fetch: \_\_\_\_\_
- hearth: \_\_\_\_\_
- linger: \_\_\_\_\_
- pace: \_\_\_\_\_
- unjust: \_\_\_\_\_



**CHALLENGE! Write one sentence that uses two vocabulary words.**

17-18. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Week: 1 - Day 1**

**A. Comprehension**

1. D

**Answers may vary slightly.**

2. The passage says that the house was “ordinary,” but that it contained “every modern convenience.”

**Answers may vary slightly for Q3-4. Check to make sure that the student answers the question generally and then uses examples from the passage for support.**

- 3-4. Mother is exciting and very loving towards her children. In the passage, it says that mother was not “dull” and that she was always willing to teach the children, play with them, and write them stories.
5. B

**Answers may vary slightly for Q6.**

6. The passage describes how happy the family was, and it hints at the fact that they would not realize how lucky they were until they had to live a different type of life. From this, I can infer that the life will be worse.
7. B
8. In the passage, Mother goes on to call Roberta “dear.”

**Explanations may vary slightly.**

- 9-10. This passage is realistic fiction. I know this because the events that are occurring are realistic and could happen in real life.

**B. Vocabulary**

- |                  |              |
|------------------|--------------|
| 1. linger        | 2. dull      |
| 3. unjust        | 4. fetch     |
| 5. hearth        | 6. pace      |
| 7. absently      | 8. engage    |
| 9. thoughtlessly | 10. boring   |
| 11. fascinate    | 12. retrieve |
| 13. fireside     | 14. remain   |
| 15. speed        | 16. Unfair   |

**Sentences will vary. Check to make sure that two vocabulary words are used correctly.**

- 17-18. I cannot engage students who are so incredibly bored with such dull material.

