
WIT & WISDOM PARENT TIP SHEET

WHAT IS MY SIXTH GRADE STUDENT LEARNING IN MODULE 1?

Wit & Wisdom is our English curriculum. It builds knowledge of key topics in history, science, and literature through the study of excellent texts. By reading and responding to stories and nonfiction texts, we will build knowledge of the following topics:

Module 1: Resilience in the Great Depression

Module 2: A Hero's Journey

Module 3: Narrating the Unknown: Jamestown

Module 4: Courage in Crisis

In this first module, *Resilience in the Great Depression*, we will study one of the worst economic situations in American history, the Great Depression. We will explore the hardships families faced and the triumphs they endured during the Great Depression.

OUR CLASS WILL READ THESE TEXTS:

Novels

- *Bud, Not Buddy*, Christopher Paul Curtis
- *Out of the Dust*, Karen Hesse

Historical Account

- "The Drought," PBS American Experience
- "Hooverilles," History.com
- "Hoover's Prodigal Children: Hungry Times on Mean Streets," Errol Lincoln Uys

Poetry

- "Mother to Son," Langston Hughes

Music

- "It Don't Mean a Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing," Duke Ellington and Irving Mills

OUR CLASS WILL EXAMINE THESE WORKS OF ART:

Photography

- *Kentucky Flood*, Margaret Bourke-White
- *Migrant Mother*, Dorothea Lange

OUR CLASS WILL WATCH THESE VIDEOS:

- “1930s GM Sit-Down Strike,” History.com
- “Black Blizzard,” History.com
- “Migrant Mother Photo,” History.com

OUR CLASS WILL ASK THESE QUESTIONS:

- What makes Bud a survivor?
- What hardships did people face during the Great Depression?
- How is Bud transformed by his journey?
- What sustained people’s spirits during the Great Depression?
- How does hardship alter the characters’ perspectives in *Out of the Dust*?
- What makes the characters in *Out of the Dust* survivors?
- How can enduring tremendous hardship contribute to personal transformation?

QUESTIONS TO ASK AT HOME:

As your sixth grade student reads, ask:

- *What do you notice and wonder?*

BOOKS TO READ AT HOME:

- *Children of the Depression*, Russell Freedman
- *On the Blue Comet*, Rosemary Wells
- *Long Way from Chicago: A Novel in Stories*, Richard Peck
- *Moon Over Manifest*, Clare Vanderpool
- *My Side of the Mountain*, Jean Craighead George
- *Sunder*, Williams H. Armstrong
- *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*, Mildred Taylor
- *No Promises in the Wind*, Irene Hunt

PLACES YOU CAN VISIT TO TALK ABOUT THE GREAT DEPRESSION:

Visit a local history museum. Ask if there are any exhibits or artifacts from the Great Depression. As you view them with your learner, ask:

- *What makes someone a survivor?*
- *What do you see here that shows the hardships people faced during the Great Depression?*
- *How can enduring hardship change us?*

WIT & WISDOM PARENT TIP SHEET

WHAT IS MY SIXTH-GRADE STUDENT LEARNING IN MODULE 2?

Wit & Wisdom is our English curriculum. It builds knowledge of key topics in history, science, and literature through the study of excellent texts. By reading and responding to literature and nonfiction texts, we will build knowledge of the following topics:

Module 1: Resilience in the Great Depression

Module 2: A Hero's Journey

Module 3: Narrating the Unknown: Jamestown

Module 4: Courage in Crisis

In this second module, *A Hero's Journey*, we will study what makes a hero. Is it simply courage, or something more? What traits do all of us share with the most famous heroes in literature?

OUR CLASS WILL READ THESE TEXTS:

Myth

- *The Odyssey*, Gillian Cross and Neil Packer
- *Ramayana: Divine Loophole*, Sanjay Patel

Articles

- "The Hero's Journey Outline," Christopher Vogler
- "A Practical Guide to Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*," Christopher Vogler

OUR CLASS WILL WATCH THESE VIDEOS:

- "The Mythology of Star Wars," Bill Moyers and George Lucas
- "Sanjay's Super Team," Sanjay Patel
- "What Makes a Hero?" Matthew Winkler

OUR CLASS WILL ASK THESE QUESTIONS:

- How does *Ramayana: Divine Loophole* exhibit the genre expectations of the monomyth, a story of an extraordinary, but flawed individual who struggles, changes, and impacts the world for good)?
- How does *The Odyssey* exhibit the genre expectations of the monomyth?
- How do translations of *The Odyssey* and *Ramayana* expand our understanding of these texts?
- How does the monomyth genre persist in and influence the stories we tell?
- What is the significance and power of the hero's journey?

QUESTIONS TO ASK AT HOME:

As your sixth-grade student reads, ask:

- *What's happening?*
- *What does a closer look at words and illustrations reveal about this text's deeper meaning?*

BOOKS TO READ AT HOME:

- *The Lightning Thief: Percy Jackson and the Olympians: Book 1*, Rick Riordan
- *Life of Pi*, Yann Martel
- *Black Ships Before Troy: The Story of the Iliad*, Rosemary Sutcliff
- *Sita's Ramayana*, Samhita Arni
- *The Hero Schliemann: The Dreamer Who Dug for Troy*, Laura Amy Schlitz and Robert Byrd
- *The Iliad*, Homer (Retold by Gillian Cross)
- *The Greek Gods*, Bernard Evslin
- *The Odyssey*, Geraldine McCaughrean and Emma Chichester Clark

IDEAS FOR TALKING ABOUT THE HERO'S JOURNEY:

As you watch movies together, ask:

- *Who was the hero?*
- *What made the hero extraordinary?*
- *What were the hero's flaws?*
- *Describe the hero's struggle.*
- *How did the hero change?*
- *How did the hero impact others or bring about change?*

Wit & Wisdom Parent Tip Sheet

WHAT IS MY GRADE 6 STUDENT LEARNING IN MODULE 3?

Wit & Wisdom is our English curriculum. It builds knowledge of key topics in history, science, and literature through the study of excellent texts. By reading and responding to literature and nonfiction texts, we will build knowledge of the following topics:

Module 1: Resilience in the Great Depression

Module 2: A Hero's Journey

Module 3: Narrating the Unknown

Module 4: Courage in Crisis

In the third module, *Narrating the Unknown*, students work across multiple texts and genres to construct a complex picture of life and struggle in Jamestown, assessing the forces—both internal and external—that brought the near demise of the colony. We will ask the question: *How did the social and environmental challenges in the unknown world of Jamestown shape its development and decline?*

OUR CLASS WILL READ THESE TEXTS:

Historical Fiction Novel (Literary)

- *Blood on the River: Jamestown 1607*, Elisa Carbone

Scientific Account (Informational)

- *Written in Bone: Buried Lives of Jamestown and Colonial Maryland*, Sally Walker

OUR CLASS WILL EXAMINE THESE PAINTINGS:

- *Nighthawks*, Edward Hopper
- *The Lighthouse at Two Lights*, Edward Hopper
- *Lighthouse Hill*, Edward Hopper

OUR CLASS WILL READ THIS ARTICLE:

- “Rethinking Jamestown,” Jeffery Sheler

OUR CLASS WILL READ AND LISTEN TO THIS SPEECH:

- “Address to Captain John Smith,” Chief Powhatan

OUR CLASS WILL VIEW THIS VIDEO:

- “Innovation in Plain Sight,” Amy Herman

OUR CLASS WILL ASK THESE QUESTIONS:

- How do the settlers respond to the challenges of their journey to the unknown?
- Who has the greatest impact on Samuel’s development during his time in Jamestown?
- How do the settlers’ and the Powhatans’ responses to the challenges of Jamestown impact its development and decline?
- How does the art and science of observation contribute to a more complete narrative of Jamestown’s development and decline?
- How did the social and environmental factors in the unknown world of Jamestown shape its development and decline?

QUESTIONS TO ASK AT HOME:

As your Grade 6 student reads, ask:

- *What is the essential meaning, or most important message, in this book?*

BOOKS TO READ AT HOME:

- *Every Bone Tells a Story: Hominin Discoveries, Deductions and Debates*, Jill Rubalcaba and Peter Robertshaw
- *The Sign of the Beaver*, Elizabeth George Speare
- *The Lost Colony of Roanoke*, Jean Fritz
- *Amelia Lost: The Life and Disappearance of Amelia Earhart*, Candace Fleming
- *Emperor’s Silent Army: Terracotta Warriors of Ancient China*, Jane O’Connor

IDEAS FOR TALKING ABOUT EVENTS OF THE PAST:

Search together online for “history mysteries” such as Roanoke Settlement, Stonehenge, or Lost City of Atlantis. Ask:

- *What happened?*
- *What are some ways historians and writers make sense of the past?*

Wit & Wisdom Parent Tip Sheet

WHAT IS MY GRADE 6 STUDENT LEARNING IN MODULE 4?

Wit & Wisdom is our English curriculum. It builds knowledge of key topics in history, science, and literature through the study of excellent texts. By reading and responding to literature and nonfiction texts, we build knowledge of the following topics:

Module 1: Resilience in the Great Depression

Module 2: A Hero's Journey

Module 3: Narrating the Unknown

Module 4: Courage in Crisis

In the fourth module, *Courage in Crisis*, students work across multiple texts to construct a complex understanding of what it means to endure hostile environments and respond heroically to positively impact others. We will ask the question: *How can the challenges of a hostile environment inspire heroism?*

OUR CLASS WILL READ THESE TEXTS:

Historical Account (Informational)

- *Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World: The Extraordinary True Story of Shackleton and the Endurance*, Jennifer Armstrong

Memoir

- *I Am Malala: How One Girl Stood Up for Education and Changed the World*, Malala Yousafzai and Patricia McCormick

OUR CLASS WILL EXAMINE THIS PAINTING:

- *Snow Storm: Steam-Boat off a Harbour's Mouth*, Joseph Mallord William Turner

OUR CLASS WILL READ THIS ARTICLE:

- "The Golden Hoard: An Ancient Afghan Treasure Is Recovered," Rachel Galvin

OUR CLASS WILL ANALYZE THIS ARTIFACT:

- Bactrian Gold Crown

OUR CLASS WILL VIEW THESE VIDEOS:

- *Lost Treasures of Afghanistan*, National Geographic
- “Malala Yousafzai Nobel Peace Prize Speech,” Malala Fund

OUR CLASS WILL ASK THESE QUESTIONS:

- How do Shackleton and his crew respond to the hostile environment of Antarctica?
- How does Armstrong’s portrayal of Shackleton and his crew develop the concept of heroism?
- How do Malala and her community respond to the hostile environment in Pakistan?
- How does Yousafzai’s and McCormick’s portrayal of Malala develop the concept of heroism?

QUESTIONS TO ASK AT HOME:

As your Grade 6 student reads, ask:

- *How does this text build your knowledge of heroism? Share what you know about responding to the challenges of hostile environments.*

BOOKS TO READ AT HOME:

- *Amelia Lost: The Life and Disappearance of Amelia Earhart*, Candace Fleming
- *Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption*, Laura Hillenbrand
- *Trapped: How the World Rescued 33 Miners from 2,000 Feet Below the Chilean Desert*, Marc Aronson
- *Freedom Walkers: The Story of the Montgomery Bus Boycott*, Russell Freedman
- *Shackleton’s Stowaway*, Victoria McKernan
- *Swiss Family Robinson*, Johann David Wyss
- *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, Jules Verne
- *Shipwrecked: Adventures of a Japanese Boy*, Rhonda Blumberg
- *Helen’s Eyes: A Photobiography of Annie Sullivan, Helen Keller’s Teacher*, Marfe Ferguson Delano
- *Candy Bomber: The Story of the Berlin Airlift’s “Chocolate Pilot,”* Michael O’Tunnell

IDEAS FOR TALKING ABOUT EVENTS OF THE PAST:

Search together online for information about other people who have faced the challenges of a hostile environment and responded with heroic action that positively impacted others:

- *What happened?*
- *How does this person build our knowledge of heroism?*