



EXPEDITIONARY  
LEARNING

# Grade 6: Module 3A: Unit 3: Lesson 9

## Organizing Research: The Inverted Pyramid



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License.  
Exempt third-party content is indicated by the footer: © (name of copyright holder). Used by permission and not subject to Creative Commons license.



**Long-Term Targets Addressed (Based on NYSP12 ELA CCLS)**

I can write informative/explanatory texts that convey ideas and concepts using relevant information that is carefully selected and organized. (W.6.2)

a. I can introduce the topic of my text.

a. I can organize my information using various strategies (e.g., definition/classification, comparison/contrast, cause/effect).

a. I can include headings, graphics, and multimedia to help readers understand my ideas.

b. I can develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, and quotations.

I can use evidence from a variety of grade-appropriate texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. (W.6.9)

I can apply grade 6 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres [e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories] in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics”). (W.6.9a)

I can integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue. (RI.6.7)

**Supporting Learning Targets**

- I can use the inverted pyramid to organize my research to form the structure of my newspaper article.
- I can choose a visual component to develop the reader’s understanding of my angle.

**Ongoing Assessment**

- Information organized according to the inverted pyramid structure on the Newspaper Article Planning graphic organizer



Agenda	Teaching Notes
<p>1. Opening</p> <p>A. Unpacking Learning Targets (2 minutes)</p> <p>2. Work Time</p> <p>A. Writing the Lead (15 minutes)</p> <p>B. Organizing Research (15 minutes)</p> <p>C. Choosing a Visual Component (8 minutes)</p> <p>3. Closing and Assessment</p> <p>A. Writing a Headline and Subheading (5 minutes)</p> <p>4. Homework</p> <p>A. Write a headline and subheading for your newspaper article on your Newspaper Article Planning graphic organizer. Remember that the headline and subheading should clearly show the angle of your newspaper article.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In this lesson, students use the inverted pyramid as a guide to organize their research information from most important to least important. Emphasize to students that real-world journalists use the inverted pyramid to make sure they put the most important information at the beginning because the reader may not read all the way to the end.</li> <li>• Students also choose a visual component for their newspaper article. For this they can choose one of the photographs used in Lesson 1 of Unit 2, or the photograph or maps used in the Mid-Unit 3 Assessment, Part 3 in Lesson 4.</li> <li>• For homework, students will write the headline and subheading. This is to ensure that students have completed their Newspaper Article Planning graphic organizer by the next lesson, when they will begin to draft their newspaper article.</li> <li>• Post: Learning targets.</li> </ul>

Lesson Vocabulary	Materials
<p>inverted pyramid, visual component, lead</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inverted Pyramid handout (one for display)</li> <li>• Newspaper Article Criteria anchor chart (from Unit 2, Lesson 12)</li> </ul> <p>Model newspaper article (from Unit 2, Lesson 12)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five W's web organizer (from Lesson 6)</li> <li>• Newspaper Article Planning graphic organizer (from Lesson 8)</li> <li>• Scrap paper (one piece per student)</li> <li>• Performance Task Prompt: 1906 San Francisco Earthquake and Fires (from Unit 2, Lesson 1)</li> <li>• Photographs from Unit 2, Lesson 1</li> <li>• Assessment Research Folders (from Lesson 4)</li> </ul>



Opening	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>A. Unpacking Learning Targets (2 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite students to read the learning targets with you:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “I can use the inverted pyramid to organize my research to form the structure of my newspaper article.”</li> <li>* “I can choose a visual component to develop the reader’s understanding of my angle.”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Tell students that the <i>inverted pyramid</i> is something journalists use to organize their ideas in their writing. Students will be introduced to it in this lesson.</li> <li>• Ask students:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “What do you think a <i>visual component</i> might be?”</li> <li>* “Why do you think you might include a visual component?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Select volunteers to share their responses. Listen for them to explain that a visual component is something like a photograph, chart, or map. It supports the content of the newspaper article without words.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning targets are a research-based strategy that helps all students, especially challenged learners.</li> <li>• Posting learning targets allows students to reference them throughout the lesson to check their understanding. The learning targets also provide a reminder to students and teachers about the intended learning behind a given lesson or activity.</li> </ul>

Work Time	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>A. Writing the Lead (15 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Display the <b>Inverted Pyramid handout</b> and tell students that this is how journalists organize their information when they are writing newspaper articles. Read it with students and ask:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “What do you notice?”</li> <li>* “What do you wonder?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Select volunteers to share their notices and wonders with the whole group.</li> <li>• Emphasize to students the reminder at the bottom of the handout: that the inverted pyramid means organizing a newspaper article with the most important information first because readers could stop reading at any time.</li> <li>• On the <b>Newspaper Article Criteria anchor chart</b>, record:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The content is organized according to the inverted pyramid, with the most important information first.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An authentic model provides students with realistic expectations of their own work.</li> <li>• Anchor charts are a way to capture whole group thinking to refer to later.</li> <li>• Consider inviting students who may need additional support writing their “lead” to work with you in a group setting, or to say it aloud before writing it.</li> </ul>



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Invite students to reread the first sentence of the <b>model newspaper article</b>. Ask:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* “What information does the first sentence tell you? Think about the inverted pyramid—what are the most important details in this newspaper report?”</li></ul></li><li>• Tell students that this first sentence, which often contains the five W’s, is called the <i>lead</i>. Explain that it doesn’t have to contain all of the five W’s, but it should contain as many as possible while still sounding engaging. Remind students that the lead needs to be engaging and compelling to hook the reader in.</li><li>• Invite students to analyze the use of language in the lead of the model newspaper article. Ask:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* “The lead contains critical facts, but how does it compel the reader to read on? Look at the language.”</li></ul></li><li>• Select volunteers to share their responses. Listen for them to explain that powerful and dramatic descriptive language has been used—for example, “packed a hurricane-sized punch” and “slammed into the Jersey Shore.”</li><li>• On the Newspaper Article Criteria anchor chart, record:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– The lead (opening sentence) contains as many of the five W’s as possible.</li><li>– The lead contains powerful, descriptive language to make it sound dramatic, which compels the reader to keep reading.</li></ul></li><li>• Explain that students are going to use their <b>Five W’s web organizer</b> to write the lead sentence of their own newspaper article in the “Lead” box on their <b>Newspaper Article Planning graphic organizer</b>.</li><li>• Invite students to spend some time thinking about it and drafting ideas on <b>scrap paper</b>.</li><li>• Circulate to support students. Ask guiding questions:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* “Have you included as many of the five W’s as possible?”</li><li>* “How can you make it compelling? What powerful and dramatic descriptive language can you use to draw the reader in?”</li></ul></li><li>• Invite students to partner up to share their ideas, and invite them to make suggestions to each other to improve the ideas and to help each other determine which is the best of their ideas to record on their Newspaper Article Planning graphic organizer.</li><li>• Ask students to record their lead on their Newspaper Article Planning graphic organizer.</li></ul>	



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>B. Organizing Research (15 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Refer students to the Inverted Pyramid handout and remind them that the most important information must come first and that the rest of the information must be organized in order of how important it is.</li><li>• Invite students to look at the first column of the table on their Newspaper Article Planning graphic organizer, which asks them to order their factual information using the inverted pyramid. Tell students that they need to keep referring to their angle when prioritizing information, as they should be looking at how important the factual information is in relation to their angle.</li><li>• Use a completed student organizer to model how to evaluate the research to determine which is the most important. Read the angle and then the information about each piece of research recorded in the middle column. Ask students:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* “So looking at the angle here, which one of these pieces of research do you think is the most important for people to know to be able to understand the angle? Why?”</li></ul></li><li>• Select volunteers to share their responses and their reasoning. Use an appropriate choice and write the number 1 in the first column to show that this piece of research should go first in the newspaper article because it is the most important.</li><li>• Explain to students that as they organize their research, they may also have to consider the order in which things happened. For example, it would make the newspaper article seem illogical if an event that happened after another event was recorded first.</li><li>• Invite students to work with a partner to look across their research on their Newspaper Article Planning graphic organizer and to record numbers in the first column to show in which order they think their research should go. Students should have only four pieces of research recorded on their organizer, so this shouldn't take them long.</li><li>• Circulate to help students organize their research. Ask guiding questions:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* “Which piece of research is most important for the reader to know in order to understand the angle of your newspaper article?”</li><li>* “Why is this piece of research more important than that one?”</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Modeling the activity for students can provide them with the expectations you have of their independent work. It can also provide students with the confidence to work independently, giving you time to support students who require additional support during work time.</li><li>• Consider pairing ELL students who speak the same first language in order to allow for a deeper discussion.</li></ul>



Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>C. Choosing a Visual Component (8 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Invite students to review the <b>Performance Task Prompt: 1906 San Francisco Earthquake and Fires</b>, particularly the final bullet that mentions an image with a caption.</li><li>• Tell students that a visual component like a photograph, map, or chart can show the reader additional information in support of the angle, without using words.</li><li>• Explain that students are now going to choose a visual component for their newspaper article from the ones they have seen so far. Invite students to refer to the <b>photographs from Unit 2, Lesson 1</b> and the photograph and maps from their <b>Assessment Research Folders</b></li><li>• Remind students that the visual component needs to support their angle and the factual information they have chosen, and that it must have a caption to describe it.</li><li>• Give students time to choose a visual component and write a caption for it on their Newspaper Article Planning graphic organizer.</li><li>• Circulate to support students in choosing visual components. Ask guiding questions:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* “Which of the resources best supports your angle? Why?”</li><li>* “How would you describe the visual component? What caption would you give it?”</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Guiding questions can point students in the right direction and encourage them to think more deeply about why they are doing what they are doing.</li></ul>



Closing and Assessment	Meeting Students' Needs
<p><b>A. Writing a Headline and Subheading (5 minutes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite students to reread the headline and subheading of the model newspaper article. Remind students that the angle of the article is: Despite all of the hardships the people of New York City and the surrounding boroughs faced as a result of the destruction from Hurricane Sandy, they tried to continue with normal life. Ask students:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “What do you notice about the headline and the subheading?”</li> <li>* “What do you wonder about the headline and the subheading?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Select volunteers to share their ideas with the whole group. If students don’t notice it, emphasize that the headline and the subheading clearly outline the angle of the newspaper article.</li> <li>• Ask students to analyze the use of language in the headline and subheading:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* “How do the headline and the subheading draw the reader in? How are they compelling?”</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Cold call students to share their ideas with the whole group. Listen for students to explain that like the lead, the headline and subheading contain powerful and dramatic descriptive language—for example, “Super Storm” and “Wins the Battle.”</li> <li>• Add to the Newspaper Article Criteria anchor chart:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The headline and subheading make the angle of the newspaper article clear.</li> <li>– The headline and subheading contain powerful and dramatic descriptive language to draw the reader in.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Tell students that for homework they will be writing a headline and subheading for their newspaper article.</li> </ul>	
Homework	Meeting Students' Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write a headline and subheading for your newspaper article on your Newspaper Article Planning graphic organizer. Remember that the headline and subheading should clearly show the angle of your newspaper article.</li> </ul>	





EXPEDITIONARY  
LEARNING

# Grade 6: Module 3A: Unit 2: Lesson 9

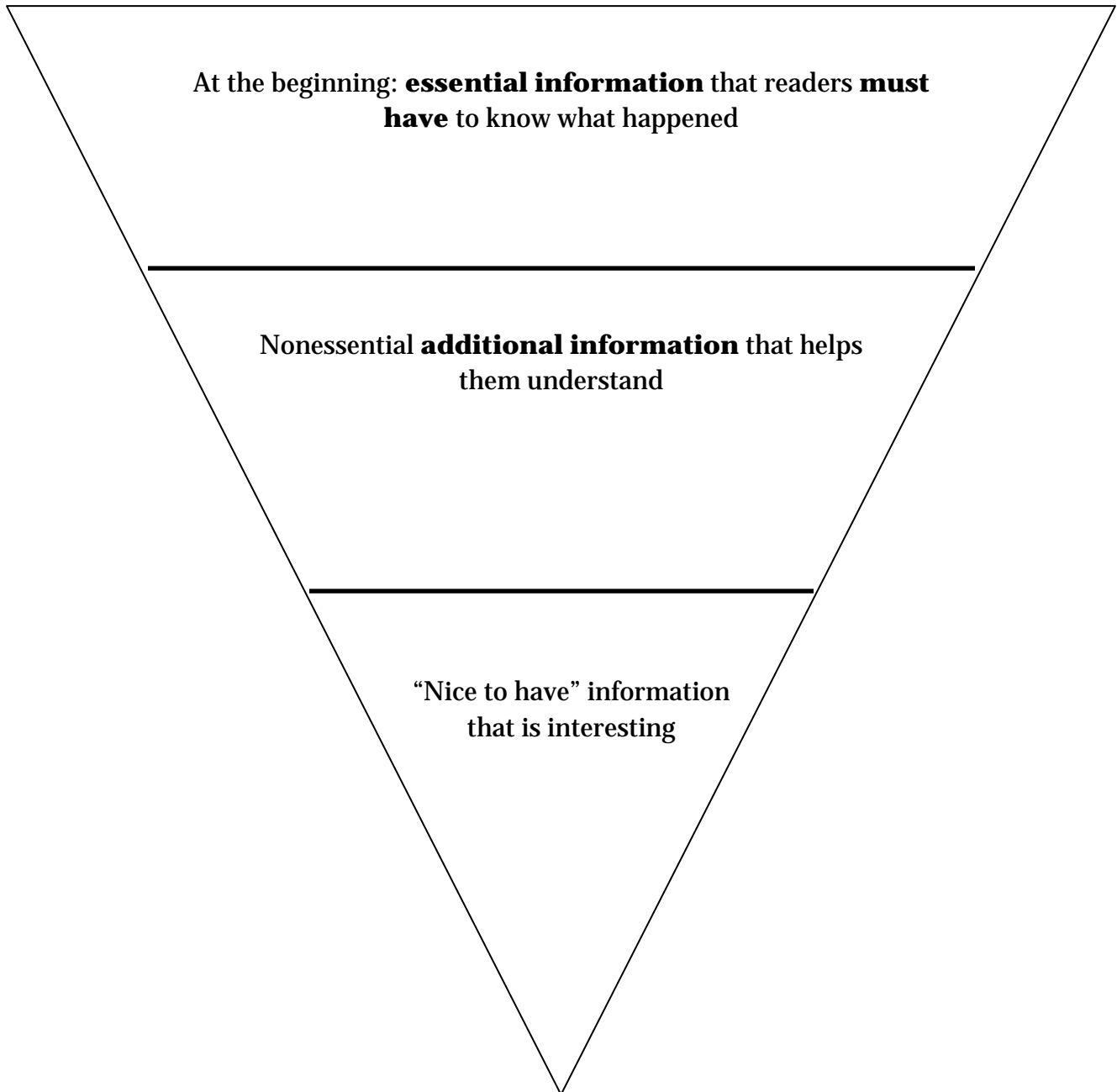
## Supporting Materials



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License.

Exempt third-party content is indicated by the footer: © (name of copyright holder). Used by permission and not subject to Creative Commons license.

Organizing Research:  
The Inverted Pyramid



**Remember: Critical information goes first.  
The reader could stop reading at any time.**