



EXPEDITIONARY  
LEARNING

# Grade 6: Module 3A: Unit 3: Overview



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**Unit 3: Researching and Interpreting Information: How the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake and Fire Affected the People of San Francisco**

In this unit, students delve more deeply into learning about the San Francisco earthquake and fire in order to write a newspaper article to answer the question: How did the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire affect the people of San Francisco? The unit informally begins in Lessons 12 and 13 of Unit 2 (while teachers assess students' literary analysis essays). Students begin by researching factual information and eyewitness accounts and collecting what they find on graphic organizers. Students also read literary texts about the earthquake and fires and make connections between the ideas in those texts. In the second half of the unit,

students analyze newspaper articles in order to learn about the features of a newspaper article. Students then evaluate the information and quotes they have collected through research to determine an angle for their article. They organize their information to write a newspaper article to answer the research question, following the inverted pyramid structure—where the most important information is at the beginning.

**Guiding Questions and Big Ideas**

- **What is the purpose of a newspaper article?**
- **Why do newspaper articles contain more than one perspective of an event?**
- *Understanding diverse points of view helps us to live in an increasingly diverse society.*
- *Newspaper articles contain multiple perspectives of the same event in order to give the reader a sense of what an event was like for a lot of different people.*



<b>Mid-Unit 3 Assessment</b>	<p><b>Part 1: Researching and Interpreting Information: Researching the Destruction Caused by the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake and Fire Affected the People of San Francisco</b></p> <p><b>Part 2: Explaining How New information Connects to the Topic</b></p> <p>This assessment centers on NYSP12 ELA CCLS RL.6.11, W.6.7, and SL.6.2. There are two parts to this assessment. In Part 1, students interpret the information presented in diverse media and formats to answer the question: What destruction did the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fires cause? They record their interpretations on a graphic organizer. In Part 2, students explain orally how the resources they have looked at contribute to the topic of the destruction caused by the 1906 earthquake and fires.</p>
<b>End of Unit 3 Assessment</b>	<p><b>Draft Newspaper Article: How the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake and Fire Affected the People of San Francisco</b></p> <p>This assessment centers on NYSP12 ELA CCLS RI.6.7, W.6.2a–f, W.6.4a, and W.6.9. Students write a first draft of their newspaper article to answer the question: How did the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire affect the people of San Francisco? They choose an angle for their newspaper article and select factual information and eyewitness quotes from research that is most compelling and relevant to their angle. They follow the journalist’s inverted pyramid structure to organize their research and their writing.</p>
<b>Final Performance Task</b>	<p><b>Newspaper Article: How the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake and Fire Affected the People of San Francisco</b></p> <p>In this performance task, students have a chance to complete their learning about the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire and how it affected the people of San Francisco by writing a newspaper article about the event. They research to gather factual information and eyewitness accounts, and then use their research to determine an angle they want to take when writing their article. They use journalist tools and techniques like the five W’s and the inverted pyramid to make their newspaper article as authentic as possible, and they analyze real-world newspaper articles in order to build criteria for their own work. This task addresses NYSP12 ELA CCLS RI.6.7, W.6.2, W.6.4a, W.6.9, and L.6.3.</p>



### Content Connections

This module is designed to address English Language Arts standards as students read literature and informational text about the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fires. However, the module intentionally incorporates Social Studies practices and themes to support potential interdisciplinary connections to this compelling content. These intentional connections are described below.

#### **Big ideas and guiding questions are informed by the New York State Common Core K–8 Social Studies Framework:**

##### **Unifying Themes (pages 6–7)**

- **Theme 1: Individual Development and Cultural Identity:** The role of social, political, and cultural interactions supports the development of identity. Personal identity is a function of an individual’s culture, time, place, geography, interaction with groups, influences from institutions, and lived experiences.
- **Theme 2: Development, Movement, and Interaction of Cultures:** Role of diversity within and among cultures. Aspects of culture such as belief systems, religious faith, or political ideas as influences on other parts of a culture such as its institutions or literature, music, and art.
- **Theme 10: Global Connections and Exchange:** Past, current, and likely future global interactions and connections. Cultural diffusion, the spread of ideas, beliefs, technology, and goods. Role of technology. Benefits/consequences of global interdependence (social, political, economic). Causes and patterns of migration of people. Tension between national interests and global priorities.

##### **Social Studies Practices: Gathering, Using, and Interpreting Evidence, Grades 5–8:**

- **Descriptor 2:** Identify, describe, and evaluate evidence about events from diverse sources (including written documents, works of art, photographs, charts and graphs, artifacts, oral traditions, and other primary and secondary sources).
- **Descriptor 3:** Analyze evidence in terms of content, authorship, point of view, purpose, and format; identify bias; explain the role of bias and audience in presenting arguments or evidence.



**Central Texts**

1. Laurence Yep, *Dragonwings* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 1975), ISBN: 978-0-064-40085-5.
2. Emma M. Burke, “Comprehending the Calamity,” in *Overlook Magazine*, June 1906 (excerpts).
3. Eliza’s Pittsinger, “Poem of the Earthquake,” as found at <http://www.sfgenealogy.com/sf/history/1906/hgpoem.htm>.
4. “Scene 1: The Great Earthquake and Fires of 1906: A Dramatic Remembrance,” written by Expeditionary Learning for instructional purposes.
5. “Waking Up in a Nightmare,” written by Expeditionary Learning for instructional purposes.
6. “Photo: View from Laguna and Market Streets of the Great Fire Burning through the Mission District,” in “16 Views of the Great Earthquake and Fire” (PowerPoint), as found at <http://www.sfmuseum.org/1906/photos.html>, Slide 7.
7. Lloyd Head, “One Boy’s Experience,” in *Our Junior Citizens*, July 28, 1906, as found at <http://www.sfmuseum.net/1906/ew7.html>.
8. “Casualties and Damage after the 1906 Earthquake,” on USGS.gov, as found at <http://earthquake.usgs.gov/regional/nca/1906/18april/casualties.php>.
9. “Photos: Area Destroyed by the Fire of April 18–21, 1906,” as found at <http://www.zpub.com/sf/history/burned.html>.
10. Matt Smith, “Sandy wreaks havoc across Northeast; at least 11 dead,” on CNN.com, October 30, 2012, as found at <http://news.blogs.cnn.com/2012/10/29/hurricane-sandy-strengthens-to-85-mpg/>.
11. “The Great 1906 San Francisco Earthquake,” on USGS.gov, as found at <http://earthquake.usgs.gov/regional/nca/1906/18april/index.php>.
12. Gladys Hansen, “Timeline of the San Francisco Earthquake, April 18–23, 1906,” on SFMuseum.org, as found at <http://www.sfmuseum.org/alm/quakes2.html>.
13. “The San Francisco Earthquake, 1906,” from Eyewitness to History, as found at <http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/sfeq.htm>.



**This unit is approximately 3 weeks or 15 sessions of instruction.**

Lesson	Lesson Title	Long-Term Learning Targets	Supporting Targets	Ongoing Assessment	Anchor Charts & Protocols
<b>Lesson 1</b>	Writing Interview Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can write informative/explanatory texts that convey ideas and concepts using relevant information that is carefully selected and organized. (W.6.2)</li> <li>I can interpret, analyze, and evaluate narratives, poetry, and drama, aesthetically and ethically by making connections to: other texts, ideas, cultural perspectives, eras, personal events, and situations. (RL.6.11)</li> <li>I can conduct short research projects to answer a question. (W.6.7)</li> <li>I can use several sources in my research. (W.6.7)</li> <li>I can refocus or refine my question when appropriate. (W.6.7)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can interpret an excerpt of a poem and make connections between it and other texts I have read.</li> <li>I can write interview questions that will provide me with the information I need in my newspaper article.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exit Ticket: Interview Questions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connecting Texts</li> </ul>
<b>Lesson 2</b>	Researching: Eyewitness Accounts, Part 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can recognize, interpret, and make connections in narratives, poetry, and drama, ethically and artistically to other texts, ideas, cultural perspectives, eras, personal events, and situations. (RL.6.11)</li> <li>I can determine the main idea of an informational text based on details in the text. (RI.6.2)</li> <li>I can summarize an informational text using only information from the text. (RI.6.2)</li> <li>I can conduct short research projects to answer a question. (W.6.7)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can interpret an excerpt of a play and make connections between it and other texts I have read.</li> <li>I can identify compelling quotes to answer my research questions in an eyewitness account.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Researching Eyewitness Accounts graphic organizer</li> </ul>	



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can use several sources in my research. (W.6.7)</li> <li>• I can refocus or refine my question when appropriate. (W.6.7)</li> </ul>			
<b>Lesson 3</b>	Researching: Eyewitness Accounts, Part 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can recognize, interpret, and make connections in narratives, poetry, and drama, ethically and artistically to other texts, ideas, cultural perspectives, eras, personal events, and situations. (RL.6.11)</li> <li>• I can determine the main idea of an informational text based on details in the text. (RI.6.2)</li> <li>• I can summarize an informational text using only information from the text. (RI.6.2)</li> <li>• I can conduct short research projects to answer a question. (W.6.7)</li> <li>• I can use several sources in my research. (W.6.7)</li> <li>• I can refocus or refine my question when appropriate. (W.6.7)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can interpret a short story and make connections between it and other texts I have read.</li> <li>• I can identify compelling quotes to answer my research questions in an eyewitness account.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researching Eyewitness Accounts graphic organizer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connecting Texts</li> </ul>
<b>Lesson 4</b>	Mid-Unit 3 Assessment Part 1: Researching the Destruction Caused by the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake and Fires	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can conduct short research projects to answer a question. (W.6.7)</li> <li>• I can use several sources in my research. (W.6.7)</li> <li>• I can refocus or refine my question when appropriate. (W.6.7)</li> <li>• I can interpret information presented in different media and formats. (SL.6.2)</li> <li>• I can explain how new information connects to a topic, text, or issue I am studying. (SL.6.2)</li> <li>• I can recognize, interpret, and make connections in narratives, poetry, and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can interpret information from different resources as part of my research about the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire and explain how it deepens my understanding of the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire.</li> <li>• I can refocus the research question to guide my continuing research.</li> <li>• I can interpret a short story and make connections between it and other texts I have read.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid-Unit 3 Assessment Part 1: Researching and Interpreting Information: Researching the Destruction Caused by the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake and Fires</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connecting Texts</li> </ul>



		drama, ethically and artistically to other texts, ideas, cultural perspectives, eras, personal events, and situations. (RL.6.11)			
<b>Lesson 5</b>	Mid-Unit 3 Assessment Part 2: Explaining How New Information Connects to the Topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can interpret information presented in different media and formats. (SL.6.2)</li> <li>I can explain how new information connects to a topic, text, or issue I am studying. (SL.6.2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can explain how the new information I found through research deepens my understanding of the destruction of the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mid-Unit 3 Assessment, Part 2: Explaining How New Information Connects to the Topic Rubric</li> <li></li> </ul>	
<b>Lesson 6</b>	The Five W's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can write informative/explanatory texts that convey ideas and concepts using relevant information that is carefully selected and organized. (W.6.2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can use the information from my research to determine who, what, where, when, and why to form the basis of my newspaper article.</li> <li>I can choose a compelling angle for my article that is supported by the information from my research.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Five W's web organizer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Newspaper Article Criteria</li> </ul>
<b>Lesson 7</b>	Analyzing the Features of a Newspaper Article	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can write informative/explanatory texts that convey ideas and concepts using relevant information that is carefully selected and organized. (W.6.2)</li> <li>I can produce text (print or nonprint) that explores a variety of cultures and perspectives (W.6.4a)</li> <li></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can identify the features of a newspaper article.</li> <li>I can evaluate research to choose the most relevant factual information to support my angle.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annotated newspaper articles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Newspaper Article Criteria</li> </ul>
<b>Lesson 8</b>	Evaluating Eyewitness Accounts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can write informative/explanatory texts that convey ideas and concepts using relevant information that is carefully selected and organized. (W.6.2)</li> <li>I can organize my information using various strategies (e.g., definition/classification, comparison/contrast, cause/effect).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can evaluate research to choose the most relevant eyewitness accounts showing a variety of perspectives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eyewitness account quotes recorded on the Newspaper Article Planning graphic organizer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Newspaper Article Criteria</li> </ul>





		<p>(W.6.2b)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, and quotations. (W.6.2d)</li> <li>• I can produce text (print or nonprint) that explores a variety of cultures and perspectives. (W.6.4a)</li> <li>• I can use evidence from a variety of grade-appropriate texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. (W.6.9)</li> <li>• 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)</li> </ul>			
<b>Lesson 9</b>	Organizing Research: The Inverted Pyramid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can write informative/explanatory texts that convey ideas and concepts using relevant information that is carefully selected and organized. (W.6.2)</li> <li>• I can introduce the topic of my text.</li> <li>• I can organize my information using various strategies (e.g., definition/classification, comparison/contrast, cause/effect).</li> <li>• I can include headings, graphics, and multimedia to help readers understand my ideas.</li> <li>• b. I can develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, and quotations.</li> <li>• I can use evidence from a variety of grade-appropriate texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. (W.6.9)</li> </ul>	<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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information organized according to the inverted pyramid structure on the Newspaper Article Planning graphic organizer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newspaper Article Criteria</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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)</li> <li>• 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)</li> </ul>			
<b>Lesson 10</b>	End of Unit 3 Assessment: Drafting the Newspaper Article	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can write informative/explanatory texts that convey ideas and concepts using relevant information that is carefully selected and organized. (W.6.2)</li> <li>• I can introduce the topic of my text.</li> <li>• I can organize my information using various strategies (e.g., definition/classification, comparison/contrast, cause/effect).</li> <li>• I can include headings, graphics, and multimedia to help readers understand my ideas.</li> <li>• I can develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, and quotations.</li> <li>• I can use transitions to clarify relationships among my ideas.</li> <li>• I can use contextually specific language/vocabulary to inform or explain about a topic.</li> <li>• I can establish and maintain a formal style in my writing.</li> <li>• I can construct a concluding statement or section of an</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can use active words and domain-specific vocabulary in my newspaper article.</li> <li>• I can draft an interesting, accurate, and objective newspaper article based on carefully selected evidence.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	• End of Unit 3 Assessment: Draft newspaper article	• Newspaper Article Criteria



		<p>informative/explanatory text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can produce text (print or nonprint) that explores a variety of cultures and perspectives. (W.6.4a)</li> <li>• I can use evidence from a variety of grade-appropriate texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. (W.6.9)</li> <li>• 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)</li> <li>• 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)</li> </ul>			
<b>Lesson 11</b>	Revising the Newspaper Article: Sentence Structure and Transitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can use a variety of sentence structures to make my writing and speaking more interesting. (L.6.3a)</li> <li>• I can maintain consistency in style and tone when writing and speaking. (L.6.3b)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can use a variety of sentence structures to make my article more interesting.</li> <li>• I can use appropriate transitions to make the newspaper article flow smoothly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised End of Unit 3 Assessment: Draft newspaper article</li> <li>• Self-assessment of the article on Row 3 of the Newspaper Article Rubric</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newspaper Article Criteria</li> </ul>
<b>Lesson 12</b>	Performance Task: Final Draft of the Newspaper Article	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can write informative/explanatory texts that convey ideas and concepts using relevant information that is carefully selected and organized. (W.6.2)</li> <li>• I can introduce the topic of my text.</li> <li>• I can organize my information using various strategies (e.g., definition/classification, comparison/contrast, cause/effect).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can use formative feedback from the teacher to revise my newspaper article.</li> <li>• I can use peer feedback to revise my article to further meet the expectations of the Newspaper Article Rubric.</li> <li>• I can write a final draft of an interesting, accurate, and objective newspaper article.</li> <li>• I can choose a section of my article to share that captures my most interesting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final draft of newspaper article</li> </ul>	



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can include headings, graphics, and multimedia to help readers understand my ideas.</li> <li>• I can develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, and quotations.</li> <li>• I can use transitions to clarify relationships among my ideas.</li> <li>• I can use contextually specific language/vocabulary to inform or explain about a topic.</li> <li>• I can establish and maintain a formal style in my writing.</li> <li>• I can construct a concluding statement or section of an informative/explanatory text.</li> <li>• I can produce text (print or nonprint) that explores a variety of cultures and perspectives. (W.6.4a)</li> <li>• I can use evidence from a variety of grade-appropriate texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. (W.6.9)</li> <li>• 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)</li> <li>• I can use a variety of sentence structures to make my writing and speaking more interesting. (L.6.3a)</li> <li>• I can maintain consistency in style and tone when writing and speaking. (L.6.3b)</li> </ul>	<p>and accurate details of the event.</p>		
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### Optional: Experts, Fieldwork, and Service

**Experts:**

- A journalist or editor from a local newspaper or magazine.

**Fieldwork:**

- Arrange for a visit to a local newspaper office, so that students can see journalists in action.
- Arrange for a visit to a museum or exhibit about earthquakes, so that students can learn more about earthquakes and the aftermath.

### Optional: Extensions

- A study of the history of a local Chinatown.
- A study of a local natural disaster and how it affected the local community.

### Preparation and Materials

- The research materials provided in the research folders in this unit are purposely of a range of Lexile measures in order to challenge students of all abilities. Guide students to choose research materials from the folder that are at an appropriate level for them. Glossaries have been provided for each of the articles, so ensure that students use the glossaries with the articles in order to gain a greater understanding of the text. Be prepared to provide support to students who will struggle with all of the texts in a group—choose one text for all of them to work with and read it for the gist as a group.