6th Grade Literature

Sixth grade holds the Asia as the focus for Literature, History, and Geography, though 6th grade Literature is certainly not confined to the literature of Asia. Studying Asia also ties in well with Catechesis for 6th grade in which the students study the New Testament. The texts in this class afford students the opportunity to interact with various genres of literature. We encourage you to join your students on their literary journey so as to also join them in meaningful conversation about their reading. The worst thing we can do for students is deconstruct literature so much that they cannot even see the story for the words. Certainly literature deconstruction allows for "convenient" busywork, but it can kill a child's love of reading. If a child reads, they will naturally pick up on character development, plot development, etc. These things can also come up naturally in conversation.

In addition to encouraging your child to read and providing him with good literature to read, be sure to let your child see you reading, too. Reading isn't something we just do for school, it is something we can do for fun and learning our entire lives!

While the 6th Grade Literature curriculum calls for the reading of certain texts, students should certainly be encouraged to read other books throughout the year as well.

Main texts for 6th Grade Literature:

- The Jungle Book by Rudyard Kipling
- Kubla Khan
- 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea by Jules Verne
- Best Russian Short Stories
- The Old Man and the Sea by Ernest Hemingway
- A Doll's House: a play by Henrik Ibsen
- The Lottery by Shirley Jackson

Teachers should make every effort not to make reading laborious for the student. However, students should be encouraged, for example, if they come across a word that cannot be surmized by context, to pause in their reading and look up the word in the dictionary. Again, at the risk of making reading laborious, students should be encouraged to keep a literature notebook that contains newfound words or words they find interesting. This same notebook could also be a place to record questions they have about what they are reading, names of characters (especially if there are many characters to remember), etc.

Being able to recall what one has read in narrative fashion should be a skill well-honed by 6th grade. Use these recollections as the start of casual conversation about what the student is reading (much like a book club). If a student recalls something particularly interesting or strange that happened in the story, probe deeper with questions like "why do you think _____ did that?" or "why do you think that happened?" If these conversations are commonplace, it will reinforce for the student to be an attuned reader, even when reading literature for pleasure.



The Jungle Book

Topics:

- Family
- Education
- Loyalty
- And more!

Textbook reference and written work:

- The Jungle Book
 - Link to an electronic version

Suggested Daily Schedule:

- Day 1: Individual reading
- Day 2: Read aloud by teacher and informal discussion
- Day 3: Individual reading
- Day 4: Read aloud by student and informal discussion

• Day 5: Individual reading

Activity and Discussion Ideas:

• The Law of the Jungle

- In the chapter entitled "Kaa's Hunting," Baloo is teaching Mowgli the Law of the Jungle. How are the techniques that Baloo uses similar to or different from the way you are taught? What are Shere Khan's thoughts on teaching and learning?
- What is the Law of the Jungle?
- What is Natural Law?
 - Check out <u>Chapter 1</u> of Natural Law: A Lutheran Reappraisal
- Keep an eye out for unmentioned references to Natural Law as you continue reading.

Poetry

- The Jungle Book is frequently interspersed with poetry. Encourage students to read, learn-by-heart, and recite each poem as it occurs.
 - Many of these poems are quite clever and contain much on which to ponder. Engage in discussion as to the meaning of the poem.
 - Remember that reading and learning poetry is good for the mind and it is also good for the Church as it helps young people better read the Psalms and other poetry in the Bible. Similarly, reading and learning-by-heart the Psalms helps young people read and understand poetry.

Anthropomorphism

- What evidence might there be that Rudyard Kipling, author of *The Jungle Book* was influenced by Aesop's fables? (Anthropomorphism, plot elements similar to some fables- ex. the mouse and the lion fable:
 "We be one blood, thou and I," Mowgli answered. "I take my life from thee tonight. My kill shall be thy kill if ever thou art hungry, O Kaa."
 - "All thanks, Little Brother," said Kaa, though his eyes twinkled. "And what may so bold a hunter kill? I ask that I may follow when next he goes abroad."

"I kill nothing,—I am too little,—but I drive goats toward such as can use them. When thou art empty come to me and see if I speak the truth. I have some skill in these [he held out his hands], and if ever thou art in a trap, I may pay the debt which I owe to thee, to Bagheera, and to Baloo, here. Good hunting to ye all, my masters."



The Jungle Book Vocabulary

20,000 Leagues Under the Sea

Topics:

- Adventure
- Loyalty
- Science
- Contentment
- And more!

Textbook reference and written work:

- 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea (Translated by Lewis Mercier, 1872)
- <u>20,000 Leagues Under the Sea</u> (Translated by William Butcher- more intensely faithful to the original French, but containing notes that are at times opined speculation)

Suggested Daily Schedule:

- Day 1: Individual reading
- Day 2: Read aloud by teacher and informal discussion
- Day 3: Individual reading
- Day 4: Read aloud by student and informal discussion
- Day 5: Individual reading

Activity and Discussion Ideas:

Words Matter

- Many different editions of 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea exist. Compare the first paragraph of several different versions (see below) and discuss the following:
 - How does word choice impact what the reader thinks or experiences while reading?

What's in a name?

 Jules Verne mentions many real people throughout his story. What can you learn about these people? (Some are mentioned only in certain translations)

- Cuvier
- Lacépède
- M. Duméril
- M. de Quatrefages
- What worldview, especially as it relates to Science, is represented by these men? (they were anti-Darwinists and/or creationists)
- Why might some translators leave mention of these scientists out?

History vs. Fiction

 Throughout the story, dates, names of ships, etc. are mentioned. What impact does using verifiable dates, etc. have on the story? (It gives the impression there might be truth to the story, etc.)

Implausibilities(or, Isn't Science Fiction Great?)

- The Butcher translation, in the front matter, offers the following questions that relate to potential implausibilities:
 - Why are the Scotia's passengers having 'lunch' at 4.17 p.m.?
 - How do you 'push' someone along when he is floating 'motionless on his back, with arms folded and legs extended'?
 - Why don't Aronnax and his companions locate the platform during their first night on the submarine?
 - How is Aronnax able to describe his own facial expressions?
 - Where does the out breathing-tube on the diving apparatus go?
 - How does the Nautilus manage to remain motionless in the depths using just its inclined planes and the thrust of its propeller?
 - Why does lightning strike fish, and not the much larger metal submarine?
 - What happens to the fragile objects in the salon when the submarine lists dramatically or collides with objects?
 - Why do Nemo's apartments take up so much space, when his twenty crew members have a living space of 5m by 2m?
 - How does the sun shine brightly at 100m depth, and how does it produce a rainbow underwater?
 - How does Aronnax hear rain 300m down?
 - If the diving helmet withstands the pressure in the depths, why isn't blood forced into the head from the unprotected body?
 - How does Nemo extract sodium from salt water, given that this requires a temperature of 3,000°C? How does a compass work inside a metal hull?
 - How does an 8-metre wide cylinder resist a pressure of 1,600 atmospheres?
 - How do you reverse a submarine at 20 knots through a narrow ice-tunnel?
 - Where does the Nautilus find the power required to do 50 knots?
 - Does the 16,000-metre rise in four minutes not equal more than 120 knots?
 - What about the bends?
 - What happens to the inclined planes when the submarine goes clean through the ship?
 - And finally, where are the toilets?

Map it!

- Use a world map to track the movements of the Nautilus
- These maps can be used as a reference: Pacific and Atlantic

Good stewardship vs. idolatry

 When does good stewardship turn into idolatry? Captain Nemo seems a good steward of the sea. At what point does good stewardship turn into worshiping the created rather than the Creator? Can you think of modern equivalents? (Sierra Club, PETA, Keep America Clean, etc.)

Tension

• There exist many examples of tension, both real and imagined, in 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea. Discuss why Verne chose not to resolve much of the tension in the story. (Ex. language barriers, love of sea vs. love of land, etc.)



Words Matter



20,000 Leagues Under the Sea Vocabulary



Not available



Not available



Not available

Topic 6 Not available			
Topic 7 Not available			
Topic 8 Not available			
Topic 9 Not available			
Topic 10 Not available			
Topic 11 Not available			
Topic 12 Not available			