Vocabulary Skill Checks

Grade 6 · Teacher keys

Score meaning only. Record the count out of six and the error pattern. These passages are held back from the printed game trips. Students may know a target word from another passage, or have seen the passage online. Ask about prior exposure and record familiar passages as practice. Where a second try exists it uses different passages. Target words can repeat across tries. Compare the error patterns for the skill. The tries have not been equated.

Grade 6 · Meaning from context · Try 1

Standards from the source items · L.6.4a, RI.6.1, RI.6.4, RL.6.4

1. D · adjacent · The detail “A visitor could examine the first model, turn slightly, and see the second.” supports “located directly beside one another”. The visitor needs only a slight turn to compare the models, so their cases are next to each other rather than far apart.

A · The word describes where things are, not whether they look or function alike.

B · The described locations are next to each other, not on different floors.

C · A side-by-side arrangement does not require a long journey between locations.

2. C · retain · The detail “The covering held warmth inside rather than producing new warmth itself.” supports “keep something from being lost”. The details show that something remains present or available rather than being created, discarded, or transformed. Try substituting this meaning into the sentence to check that it fits.

A · The object or heat remains present; it is not changed into a different form.

B · Keeping something available is the opposite of sending it away.

D · The passage describes keeping an existing thing, not creating something new.

3. A · tentative · The detail “Everyone understood that Sunday or the following weekend might work better if circumstances changed before the outing.” supports “not yet settled and open to change”. The possibility of a later change shows that the decision is not final; it has not been abandoned or kept secret. Try substituting this meaning into the sentence to check that it fits.

B · The choice is still being considered rather than rejected as impossible.

C · The choice is discussed openly; secrecy does not explain the word.

D · The choice may change when more information arrives, so it is not certain.

4. D · resourceful · The detail “The materials had been meant for packing, yet he found a useful new way to combine what was available instead of waiting for replacement equipment.” supports “creative in solving practical problems”. Finding an unexpected practical use for existing materials shows creative problem solving rather than spending, inflexibility, or following a fixed plan. Try substituting this meaning into the sentence to check that it fits.

A · The solution involves a new use of materials, not simply following fixed directions.

B · The person adapts to an unexpected problem instead of refusing to change.

C · The solution uses available materials rather than money for replacements.

5. B · resilient · The detail “After each failed attempt, he adjusted his plan and returned to the work with renewed energy instead of giving up.” supports “able to recover and continue after setbacks”. Recovering successfully after pressure or difficulty shows the ability to recover rather than permanent damage or surrender. Try substituting this meaning into the sentence to check that it fits.

A · The student adjusts his plan after failure; resilience does not mean succeeding immediately.

C · He changes his approach and tries again, rather than refusing to learn from a failed attempt.

D · A resilient person may feel disappointed; the student recovers and continues after a setback.

6. C · debris · The detail “Splintered boards, torn fabric, and pieces of broken plaster lay scattered where the platform had been taken apart.” supports “loose remains of something broken apart”. The listed broken pieces establish loose remains left by damage or removal, not intact equipment or a collection chosen for value. Try substituting this meaning into the sentence to check that it fits.

A · Scattered broken pieces are no longer firmly connected.

B · The broken material is being removed, not collected because it is valuable.

D · Repair tools are equipment used for a job, not loose remains left by damage.

Grade 6 · Meaning from context · Try 2

Standards from the source items · L.6.4a, RI.6.1, RI.6.4, RL.6.1, RL.6.4

1. C · tentative · The detail “The committee could still change its choice after checking other bookings.” supports “not finally decided and open to change”. The possibility of a later change shows that the decision is not final; it has not been abandoned or kept secret. Try substituting this meaning into the sentence to check that it fits.

A · The choice may change when more information arrives, so it is not certain.

B · The choice is discussed openly; secrecy does not explain the word.

D · The choice is still being considered rather than rejected as impossible.

2. D · resourceful · The detail “Using leftover cloth and a spare hook, Eva invented a fastening that worked without buying any new equipment.” supports “able to adapt available materials well”. Finding an unexpected practical use for existing materials shows creative problem solving rather than spending, inflexibility, or following a fixed plan. Try substituting this meaning into the sentence to check that it fits.

A · The solution involves a new use of materials, not simply following fixed directions.

B · The solution uses available materials rather than money for replacements.

C · The person adapts to an unexpected problem instead of refusing to change.

3. B · abundant · The detail “Every shelf held full baskets, with enough tomatoes for the festival and many more left for the following market.” supports “present in a very large quantity”. The supply exceeds what is needed, showing a large amount rather than a shortage, thin distribution, or rule about use. Try substituting this meaning into the sentence to check that it fits.

A · A thin spread can still be a small amount; these details emphasize having plenty.

C · The word describes quantity, not a restriction on how something may be used.

D · The described supply is readily available rather than hard to find.

4. A · persistent · The detail “Although several searches produced nothing, he kept contacting new sources and checking old boxes until the photograph finally appeared.” supports “staying with a task when progress is difficult”. The repeated effort after setbacks shows continued pursuit of the goal, not instant success, abandonment, or refusal to consider advice. Try substituting this meaning into the sentence to check that it fits.

B · The same goal is pursued through difficulties instead of being abandoned for a new interest.

C · The repeated attempts show that progress takes time, rather than happening without delay.

D · Continuing to pursue a goal does not require refusing helpful advice.

5. D · adjacent · The detail “Their doors stood side by side, with only a narrow section of wall separating the two entrances.” supports “next to each other”. The side-by-side arrangement establishes closeness of location, not identical appearance, a long separation, or different floors. Try substituting this meaning into the sentence to check that it fits.

A · The word describes where things are, not whether they look or function alike.

B · The described locations are next to each other, not on different floors.

C · A side-by-side arrangement does not require a long journey between locations.

6. B · retain · The detail “The newspaper would stay in the archive for future readers instead of being thrown away with the old worksheets.” supports “hold on to something for continued use”. The details show that something remains present or available rather than being created, discarded, or transformed. Try substituting this meaning into the sentence to check that it fits.

A · The passage describes keeping an existing thing, not creating something new.

C · The newspaper is kept as it is; it is not changed into a different form.

D · Keeping something available is the opposite of sending it away.

Grade 6 · Word parts · Try 1

Standards from the source items · L.6.4a, L.6.4b, RI.6.1, RI.6.4, RL.6.4

1. A · biodegradable · The detail “One description said that tiny living organisms could gradually break the material into simpler substances.” supports “able to be broken down by living things”. Bio- relates to life, degrade means break down, and -able means capable of being. Together they describe material that living organisms can break down. Use the meaningful word parts, then check that meaning against the situation.

B · Bio- points to living organisms doing the breaking down; the material need not itself be alive.

C · The passage describes a breakdown process over time, not immediate disappearance.

D · The material can break down, rather than resist every possible kind of damage forever.

2. D · reconsider · The detail “Before giving a final answer, he looked at the new schedule and weighed whether the shorter shift would fit his plans.” supports “examine a decision thoughtfully again”. Re- means again, and consider means think carefully. Together they mean think carefully about a previous decision again. Use the meaningful word parts, then check that meaning against the situation.

A · The word concerns reviewing a decision, not carrying it out at once.

B · Re- calls for another thoughtful look rather than accepting a first choice automatically.

C · Thinking through a choice again does not mean transferring every decision to someone else.

3. C · aquatic · The detail “The water-habitat cards showed plants with their stems surrounded by water rather than rooted in dry ground beside a path.” supports “living or growing in water”. The Latin root aqua means water. It helps explain why aquatic describes living things or environments associated with water. Use the meaningful word parts, then check that meaning against the situation.

A · Aqua relates to water, and the habitat details conflict with dry-soil life.

B · The root concerns water rather than the time of day when something is active.

D · The habitat is water-based; no particular mountain height defines the word.

4. D · transport · The detail “Vehicles would carry supplies between locations, rather than make the food or decide who would receive it at each shelter.” supports “carry goods between different locations”. Trans- means across, and the Latin root port means carry. Together they mean carry something between places. Use the meaningful word parts, then check that meaning against the situation.

A · Trans- and port point to carrying an existing object, not constructing one from parts.

B · The passage describes movement between locations rather than keeping something in place.

C · Carrying something does not decide who owns it.

5. B · inaccessible · The detail “A disconnected storage device kept every club member from opening the shared file.” supports “unable to be opened or reached”. The prefix in- means not, and accessible means able to be reached or entered. Together they mean not able to be reached or entered. Use the meaningful word parts, then check that meaning against the situation.

A · The negative prefix and the blocked access mean it cannot currently be reached, not just that reaching it takes care.

C · The prefix in- reverses the idea of access rather than opening it to everyone.

D · The word parts do not mean again, and the passage does not promise access after a short wait.

6. C · predictable · The detail “Its buses arrived at the same interval every day, so travelers could work out the next arrival before looking at the clock.” supports “able to be anticipated in advance”. Predict means tell or work out what is likely to happen, and -able means capable of being. Together they describe something whose result can be anticipated. Use the meaningful word parts, then check that meaning against the situation.

A · Knowing what will happen does not limit an event to a single occurrence.

B · Being able to anticipate something does not mean being able to change it by asking.

D · Predict refers to anticipating beforehand, not waiting until after an event.

Grade 6 · Word parts · Try 2

Standards from the source items · L.6.4a, L.6.4b, RI.6.1, RI.6.4, RL.6.1, RL.6.4

1. B · aquatic · The detail “Their plan showed animals living and moving in a large pool, with the surrounding water forming the main part of their environment.” supports “related to life in water habitats”. The Latin root aqua means water. It helps explain why aquatic describes living things or environments associated with water. Use the meaningful word parts, then check that meaning against the situation.

A · The root concerns water rather than the time of day when something is active.

C · The habitat is water-based; no particular mountain height defines the word.

D · Aqua relates to water, and the habitat details conflict with dry-soil life.

2. D · transport · The detail “She would load the instruments into a vehicle at school and carry them to the community center for the performance.” supports “move goods or people between locations”. Trans- means across, and the Latin root port means carry. Together they mean carry something between places. Use the meaningful word parts, then check that meaning against the situation.

A · Carrying something does not decide who owns it.

B · The passage describes movement between locations rather than keeping something in place.

C · Trans- and port point to carrying an existing object, not constructing one from parts.

3. C · interdependent · The detail “The performers and sound team relied on one another to time their actions.” supports “depending on each other to work successfully”. Inter- means between or among, and dependent means relying on support. Together they describe two or more things that rely on one another. Use the meaningful word parts, then check that meaning against the situation.

A · Each side needs the other, so they are not entirely independent.

B · The relationship involves shared needs, not merely being physically close.

D · Support works in both directions rather than benefiting only one controlling side.

4. A · subsurface · The detail “The plan placed the pipes beneath the ground’s outer layer instead of laying them across the top of the streets.” supports “located below the visible outer layer”. Sub- means under or below, and surface is the outer layer. Together they mean below that outer layer. Use the meaningful word parts, then check that meaning against the situation.

B · Being under an outer layer differs from spreading across it in all directions.

C · The prefix describes position, not the order in which work is completed.

D · Sub- means below, which conflicts with a location at the highest point.

5. B · biodegradable · The detail “Under the conditions described on its card, microorganisms could break that wrapping down into simpler substances over time.” supports “capable of decay through living organisms”. Bio- relates to life, degrade means break down, and -able means capable of being. Together they describe material that living organisms can break down. Use the meaningful word parts, then check that meaning against the situation.

A · The material can break down, rather than resist every possible kind of damage forever.

C · Bio- points to living organisms doing the breaking down; the material need not itself be alive.

D · The passage describes a breakdown process over time, not immediate disappearance.

6. C · reconsider · The detail “They returned to the original decision, examined the new information, and discussed the options before deciding what to do.” supports “think over a previous choice once more”. Re- means again, and consider means think carefully. Together they mean think carefully about a previous decision again. Use the meaningful word parts, then check that meaning against the situation.

A · The word concerns reviewing a decision, not carrying it out at once.

B · Thinking through a choice again does not mean transferring every decision to someone else.

D · Re- calls for another thoughtful look rather than accepting a first choice automatically.

Grade 6 · Multiple meanings · Try 1

Standards from the source items · L.6.4a, RI.6.1, RI.6.4, RL.6.1, RL.6.4

1. D · range · The detail “The longest range belonged to a vehicle that could cover sixty kilometers on one charge.” supports “distance covered before power is needed”. Sixty kilometers on one charge measures the distance a vehicle can travel before needing more power. Try substituting this meaning into the sentence to check that it fits.

A · The information card measures how far a vehicle travels before charging; it does not describe cooking.

B · There is no sporting practice ground in the described situation.

C · The sixty-kilometer measure describes travel distance, not the number or variety of choices.

2. B · yield · The detail “The yield from the first plot was twenty baskets of vegetables, while the second produced only twelve.” supports “amount produced by a crop or process”. The twenty baskets and twelve baskets are amounts produced by the two garden plots, so yield refers to the harvest amount. Try substituting this meaning into the sentence to check that it fits.

A · The word labels the amount harvested from the plot, not a refusal to consider another planting plan.

C · Yield can mean give way, but the garden comparison uses it for the amount of vegetables harvested.

D · The baskets describe production from the plot, not a guarantee about a future result.

3. C · current · The detail “A gap in the wire prevented electric charge from flowing around the complete circuit and reaching the lamp.” supports “movement of electrical charges”. The battery, wires and lamp establish the electrical meaning. A gap interrupts the movement needed for the lamp to work.

A · A barrier prevents movement, while the target word names the movement itself.

B · That meaning concerns time; this passage describes physical movement through a system.

D · A current of opinion is a shared trend in ideas; this passage identifies a physical flow.

4. B · channel · The detail “Students could use the form to send proposals directly to the council, which reviewed the submissions at its weekly meeting.” supports “a route through which information is sent”. The form carries student proposals to the council; channel names a route for communicating information here. Try substituting this meaning into the sentence to check that it fits.

A · Television is a possible meaning elsewhere, but no programs or broadcasting are described here.

C · A route allows something to travel; it is not a command to obey.

D · The described route carries something onward rather than stopping all movement.

5. C · bank · The detail “People brought money there to keep it in accounts and could arrange to borrow funds for homes or businesses.” supports “a business that holds money and lends”. Keeping money in accounts and making loans identifies bank as a financial organization in this context. Try substituting this meaning into the sentence to check that it fits.

A · Holding money in accounts and arranging loans are services of a financial institution, not audience seating.

B · A supply of something can be called a bank, but the accounts and loans identify a financial organization here.

D · The class tours an organization that handles money; no vehicle or person is tilting through a turn.

6. A · conduct · The detail “Standing in front of the musicians, she used her hands to guide their entrances, pace, and changes in loudness.” supports “direct musicians during a performance”. Guiding the musicians’ entrances, pace and loudness describes directing their performance, which is this use of conduct. Try substituting this meaning into the sentence to check that it fits.

B · That sense concerns behavior or manners; the target verb describes directing an activity.

C · The passage concerns leading an activity, not a material passing heat or electricity.

D · The actions involve taking part and giving direction, not only writing a plan.

Grade 6 · Figurative language · Try 1

Standards from the source items · L.6.4a, L.6.5a, RL.6.4

1. D · an open book · The detail “Anyone watching could tell how delighted he felt, even before he said a word.” supports “someone whose emotions are easy to read”. The feelings can be read easily, like words on an open page, rather than concealed or connected to actual reading. Compare the literal picture with what is actually happening in the passage.

A · The phrase compares a person to a readable book; no actual reading explains the reaction.

B · The feelings are easy to see, which is the opposite of successfully hiding them.

C · The description concerns visible emotions rather than memorized information.

2. C · a spark of hope · The detail “It was only one small possibility, not a confirmed solution, but it made members believe that the performance might still be possible after all.” supports “a small feeling that success may come”. The small positive possibility begins renewed optimism; it does not guarantee success or describe an actual flame. Compare the literal picture with what is actually happening in the passage.

A · The context concerns a positive expectation rather than an actual fire.

B · A small possibility encourages the group without guaranteeing success.

D · The phrase introduces a reason for optimism, not certainty of failure.

3. A · a sea of faces · The detail “She could not pick out a single familiar person among the many people looking toward the stage.” supports “a very large crowd of people”. The comparison suggests a large continuous crowd, not actual water, a single person, or identical appearances. Compare the literal picture with what is actually happening in the passage.

B · The passage emphasizes many people rather than one familiar individual.

C · The phrase compares a crowd to a sea; the people are in a hall, not floating in water.

D · The comparison describes the crowd’s size and spread, not identical appearances.

4. B · held its breath · The detail “Nobody spoke or moved while the glider wavered above the grass.” supports “waited silently in tense anticipation”. The silence and stillness before an uncertain result convey anticipation, not dangerous air, exhaustion, or confusion. Compare the literal picture with what is actually happening in the passage.

A · No dangerous air is described; the phrase conveys tense anticipation.

C · The group is focused on the event, not confused about why it is there.

D · The stillness comes from waiting for an important result rather than exhaustion.

5. D · a silver ribbon · The detail “Its narrow, winding surface reflected a bright line across the darker land.” supports “a thin, bright, twisting river”. The bright, narrow, curving shape explains the comparison; no actual ribbon, broad unbounded area, or dark straight route is described. Compare the literal picture with what is actually happening in the passage.

A · This is a visual comparison, not an actual strip of fabric tied into a bow.

B · The description emphasizes a narrow strip rather than a broad area with no edges.

C · The light and curves conflict with something completely straight and dark.

6. C · a mountain of work · The detail “The tasks seemed so numerous that finishing them would require careful planning and many afternoons of effort.” supports “an enormous amount of work to complete”. The mountain comparison emphasizes the large amount still to do, not a location, completed task, or hidden assignment. Compare the literal picture with what is actually happening in the passage.

A · The amount of work is clearly visible rather than hidden.

B · Many tasks remain ahead; the work is not one completed assignment.

D · The comparison concerns the size of the task, not a mountain location.

Grade 6 · Shades of meaning · Try 1

Standards from the source items · L.6.4a, L.6.5c, RI.6.4, RL.6.1, RL.6.4

1. B · subtle · The detail “It altered the mood gently without attracting attention to itself.” supports “gentle or slight enough to be hard to notice”. The small effect is sensed without drawing immediate attention, so it is neither absent nor dramatic or impossible to understand. Notice what the word choice suggests about the effect being described.

A · The change exists and affects the mood, although it is not obvious.

C · The word describes a delicate effect, not something nobody could understand.

D · A slight change that avoids attention does not dominate everything else.

2. A · deliberate · The detail “Each action followed a considered decision rather than a hurried guess, even when other teams began cheering that they had finished.” supports “carefully considered and done with a purpose”. Clear reasoning and purpose give the word its sense of thoughtful intention, not accident, confusion, or aimless change. Notice what the word choice suggests about the person’s actions or attitude.

B · A reasoned choice is the opposite of an accident without a plan.

C · The person compares options for a reason instead of changing aimlessly.

D · The careful pace serves a clear purpose rather than showing failure to understand.

3. B · modest · The detail “He acknowledged his contribution without boasting or making himself seem more important than the rest of the team.” supports “not boastful about personal achievements”. The response recognizes an achievement without exaggerated self-praise, rather than denying ability, claiming all credit, or showing social fear. Notice what the word choice suggests about the person’s actions or attitude.

A · The word concerns an attitude toward praise, not necessarily fear of speaking.

C · The person acknowledges contributing rather than denying all usefulness.

D · Giving others credit conflicts with claiming the entire achievement.

4. D · neutral · The detail “She gave neither design an advantage and used the same respectful tone when introducing both proposals.” supports “not favoring either side of a disagreement”. Equal treatment and the absence of persuasion show no preference for a side, not confusion, popularity seeking, or omission of details. Notice what the word choice suggests about the person’s actions or attitude.

A · The passage shows no preference, even for a popular side.

B · Both positions are explained rather than left out.

C · Both positions can be understood without supporting either one.

5. C · assertive · The detail “Elena insisted on a fair hearing, then listened respectfully to the other views.” supports “firm about a view while respecting others”. Firmness combined with respect gives the word a positive sense distinct from aggression, silence, or automatic agreement. Notice what the word choice suggests about the person’s actions or attitude.

A · The response is firm and respectful, unlike an aggressive attempt to dominate others.

B · Standing up for a view is different from agreeing automatically with every suggestion.

D · The person states a view clearly instead of being too uncertain to speak.

6. A · cautious · The detail “She checked how the tool should be held and tried a slow practice movement before beginning the actual task.” supports “attentive to possible danger before acting”. The word suggests sensible care about risks, rather than refusal to act, denial of danger, or reckless speed. Notice what the word choice suggests about the person’s actions or attitude.

B · The passage emphasizes considering risks before acting, not rushing past them.

C · The person continues with care rather than refusing all unfamiliar activity.

D · Checking before acting shows awareness of danger rather than certainty that none exists.

Grade 6 · Shades of meaning · Try 2

Standards from the source items · L.6.4a, L.6.5c, RI.6.1, RI.6.4, RL.6.1, RL.6.4

1. B · modest · The detail “She accepted that her planning had helped but gave credit to the other volunteers instead of praising herself as the only reason for success.” supports “accepting success without boasting”. The response recognizes an achievement without exaggerated self-praise, rather than denying ability, claiming all credit, or showing social fear. Notice what the word choice suggests about the person’s actions or attitude.

A · Giving others credit conflicts with claiming the entire achievement.

C · The person acknowledges contributing rather than denying all usefulness.

D · The word concerns an attitude toward praise, not necessarily fear of speaking.

2. C · neutral · The detail “It explained both positions fairly without favoring either side or trying to persuade readers to choose one of them.” supports “fair to both sides without favoring either”. Equal treatment and the absence of persuasion show no preference for a side, not confusion, popularity seeking, or omission of details. Notice what the word choice suggests about the person’s actions or attitude.

A · Both positions are explained rather than left out.

B · The passage shows no preference, even for a popular side.

D · Both positions can be understood without supporting either one.

3. A · frugal · The detail “Members avoided waste, repaired usable stands, and saved money for necessary supplies without leaving any part of the display unfinished.” supports “economical while still providing what is needed”. The details give the word a positive sense of avoiding waste while meeting needs, not selfish refusal, carelessness, or showy spending. Notice what the word choice suggests about the person’s actions or attitude.

B · The choices serve practical needs rather than an effort to impress an audience.

C · The group pays attention to cost and waste instead of spending carelessly.

D · Necessary materials are still provided, so the word does not suggest refusing all needed spending.

4. B · skeptical · The detail “Mateo asked for an older source to support the date before accepting the claim, although he remained willing to be convinced.” supports “questioning whether evidence supports a claim”. The word conveys thoughtful doubt and interest in evidence, not permanent rejection, trust in appearance, or lack of interest. Notice what the word choice suggests about the person’s actions or attitude.

A · An appealing presentation is not enough; supporting evidence is requested.

C · The person is open to convincing evidence instead of automatically rejecting every unfamiliar claim.

D · Looking for reliable support shows interest in truth rather than indifference.

5. A · subtle · The detail “The new sound was only slightly softer and warmer, so listeners sensed a different mood without immediately noticing what had changed.” supports “slight but able to influence the mood”. The small effect is sensed without drawing immediate attention, so it is neither absent nor dramatic or impossible to understand. Compare words such as slight and dramatic with how strongly the sound change affects the scene.

B · The change exists and affects the mood, although it is not obvious.

C · The word describes a delicate effect, not something nobody could understand.

D · A slight change that avoids attention does not dominate everything else.

6. D · deliberate · The detail “He compared what each picture communicated and selected one for a clear reason, rather than simply taking the first image he saw.” supports “made thoughtfully rather than by chance”. Clear reasoning and purpose give the word its sense of thoughtful intention, not accident, confusion, or aimless change. Notice what the word choice suggests about the person’s actions or attitude.

A · The person compares options for a reason instead of changing aimlessly.

B · The careful pace serves a clear purpose rather than showing failure to understand.

C · A reasoned choice is the opposite of an accident without a plan.