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English Language Arts 6th Grade
Semester 1 Examination (20% of Final Grade)
Study Guide

Directions: Use the word bank below to match each vocab term to its definition in the section below.

Word Bank

Theme	Plot	Climax	Falling Action
<i>Rising Action</i>	Compare and contrast	<i>Author's Purpose</i>	<i>Context Clues</i>
Repetition	Characterization	<i>Supporting Details</i>	Objective summary:
Central Idea	Structure	Point of View	Narrator

Definitions

	The perspective from which a story is told. It depends on who the narrator or speaker is and how much he or she knows. The _____ could be first person (I went to the store), second person (You went to the store), or third person (He went to the store). (RL6)
	The character who tells the story in a literary text from his or her point of view. (RL6)
	In a literary writing, writers use structure to convey meaning. This helps break longer pieces of writing into smaller portions that are grouped together because they happened around the same time or because they share a similar meaning. (RL5) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter: A chapter is a section of a book. Books are often divided into chapters. (RL5) • Scene: A scene is a section of a drama or play. Plays are often divided into scenes. (RL5) • Stanza: A stanza is a section of a poem. Poems are often divided into stanzas. (RL5)
	The specific order of a series of events that form a story. (RL3)
	The lesson or message of a literary text. For example, a story could be about two friends who like to do things together, and the theme might be the importance of friendship. (RL2)
	An overview of a text that captures the main points but does not give every detail and does not include opinions. (RL2)
	The most important point or idea that the author is making in a text. It is also known as the main idea. (RL2)
	This refers to the way an author develops a character over the course of a text. (RL3)
	This text structure is used when analyzing two things, such as characters or stories, in relation to each other, and while analyzing the differences between two things, such as two different characters or stories. (RL9)
	When words, symbols, themes or other parts of the story are used more than once for emphasis

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	The most intense, exciting, or important point of a story: the turning point (RL3)
	The part of a story that comes after the climax and before the very end. . (RL3)
	Additional information that explains, defines, supports, or proves the main idea. (RL2)
	Hints that an author gives in the passage to help define an unfamiliar word (L4a)
	The authors reason for writing; to entertain the reader, to persuade the reader, or to inform the reader about a subject (RI6)

Moctezuma II

Read the passage below and annotate by highlighting or underlining the evidence found in the passage to answer the following questions. Be sure to write the number of the question next to the paragraph where you found the answer.

I sit in my own palace, a prisoner at the hands of Cortés. I have heard rumors that my people are becoming more and more angry at these strange men who wish to rule us all. How did it happen that, once I was the great ruler of the Aztec Empire, but now I am nothing more than a hostage of Spain? I fear that my time with these conquerors may be brief. As I continue to reflect on these last few months, I constantly return to the same question. How did this happen? With nothing but my temple to console me, I roll my experiences around in my mind, searching for any answer that will explain my fate.

Just a few months ago by our calendar, I first heard of these men from another land—dressed in strange clothing, riding four-legged animals, and pulling some strange metal device. A weapon that erupted with smoke and a roar and destroyed buildings in its path. They called it a cannon, but I called it the fist of a god. I had sent runners out into the valley to learn more about these men, but the news was never good. Cortés' men had made friends with my enemies. As these men with their strange animals and weapon crossed my land, they would destroy any and all people who challenged them. Then there was news of the massacre—thousands killed and a city burned. It was then that I had thought of my plan.

It was obvious that this army intended to enter my dear capital. They would not stop until they reached Tenochtitlán. I would welcome them and become friends with these strange invaders. I would let them come to trust me, present them with gifts of gold, and let them see that they had nothing to fear from me. They treated their friends with some respect, so I would become their friend. But I would also watch them, learn their weaknesses, and in case Cortes planned to take over my land, I would have a plan to drive them from my land or perhaps I would kill them myself.

When they arrived on the shores of my lake, I welcomed them peacefully and walked with them through my capital. I offered them friendship, but I also paid close attention to their ways and words. When I presented them with the gold, instead of looking pleased, Cortés' eyes narrowed, and he asked if there were more. Foolishly, I told him of my mines. Over the next days, I escorted him into the city where we met with my most valued noblemen. I treated Cortés as if he were sent by our god Quetzalcoatl, and I had believed that he could not see what my true intentions were. But he did.

At last, his soldiers were summoned to my palace, and I was chained as if I were a common man, not the ruler of the Aztecs. I was forced to send messages to my people, messages that were full of lies. When any of my men were allowed to see me, the news was not good. My people were angry. They wanted to see and to hear me, not Cortés. He was the one who had tricked me. My power was nothing to him. He had only wanted my wealth and my land.

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I must accept responsibility for my imprisonment. I should have fallen on him with all of my people and our weapons. I should not have allowed him into my capital. What will become of me? What will become of my people? What will become of my Empire? Perhaps the gods have turned away from us. If so, there is no hope.

1. Who was Moctezuma II?

2. Based on "Moctezuma II," what were Moctezuma II's intentions when he said, "I had believed that he could not see what my true intentions were"?

3. What does the author use to convey the theme of the passage?

4. Moctezuma was a great Aztec leader until the Spanish invaders showed up. He could not decide whether to befriend Cortes and his soldiers by giving them gold or to fight to defend his empire. If only he had been more clever, been more resolute, and had more courage, he would not have been conquered so easily. In the end, Cortes and his men took over the Aztec Empire.

Which sentence could be removed to omit personal opinion from the summary?

5. Which plot element **BEST** describes the moment when Cortes' soldiers stormed the palace and put Moctezuma in chains?

6. According to "Moctezuma II," what early mistake did Moctezuma make that led to his imprisonment?

7. What is the meaning of the word **erupted** in the passage?

*A weapon that **erupted** with smoke and a roar destroyed buildings in its path.*

8. What is indicated by the author's repeated use of the pronoun "I" in "Montezuma II"?

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9. How does the author establish Moctezuma II's concern for his people and develop it throughout the story?
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Alone

Alone in my head, I'm feeling so low.
I did something wrong, No one can know.
I'm sad and tired, I can't sleep at night,
You haunt my dreams when I turn out the light.
Deep down inside, I know it's my fault,
So I'm just going to lock it away in my vault.

10. How is the theme of "Moctezuma II" similar to the poem "Alone"?
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11. What is the meaning of **present** as it is used in the sentence?

*I would let them come to trust me, **present** them with gifts of gold, and let them see that they had nothing to fear from me*

12. SKIP

The End of the Aztec Empire

Read the passage below and annotate by highlighting or underlining the evidence found in the passage to answer the following questions. Be sure to write the number of the question next to the paragraph where you found the answer.

During the 1200s, the Mexica were people from northern Mexico who migrated into Central Mexico. The Mexica, later known as the Aztecs, built an empire that included an elaborate calendar of 365 days and advanced farming techniques that used irrigation and terraces. They built a capital city that was in the middle of a lake and acquired wealth that included both gold and silver. In 1519, however, this thriving empire began to decline at the hands of Spanish conquerors and Hernán Cortés.

The Valley of Mexico, the home of the Aztec Empire, and the capital of Tenochtitlán (te-nawch-tee-tlahn), thrived during the 14th and 15th centuries. At its height, just before 1519, six million people were part of the empire. The Aztecs raised crops that included maize, avocados, beans, squash, sweet potatoes,

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tomatoes, and chilies to trade in busy marketplaces. They held rituals and made offerings to their gods. They lived a life governed by their gods and the seasons of the year.

In 1519, Spanish explorer Hernán Cortés was given a commission to explore and claim the interior of Mexico for Spain. He left Cuba with eleven ships, five hundred men, thirteen horses, and a cannon. He landed on the Yucatán Peninsula, and in March of 1519, Cortés claimed the interior of Mexico for the Spanish crown. By July of that year, he had managed to take over several smaller towns and had a plan for taking the capital of Tenochtitlán.

In October of 1519, Cortés came upon the second largest city of the empire, Cholula. There, he killed thousands of unarmed native people and partially destroyed the city by burning it. The news of these events spread to the capital as Cortés marched on.

On November 8, 1519, Cortés and his army reached Tenochtitlán and were greeted by Moctezuma II, the ruler of the empire. Moctezuma welcomed Cortés and his men, hoping that by inviting them into the capital city, he could learn about the Spaniards and discover their weaknesses. He gave them gifts of gold and offered them respect. Cortés, however, repaid this kindness by taking Moctezuma prisoner in his own palace, planning to rule the empire through him.

On July 1, 1520, Moctezuma met his death at the hands of the Spaniards. Cortés and his men eventually left Tenochtitlán because the native people were very angry with them. Cortés was forced to leave much of Moctezuma's treasure behind. In retaliation, Cortés began to cut off supplies to the capital city and continued to battle the native people. Finally, in August of 1521, Cortés forced the end of the Aztec Empire. He was appointed Governor of the country by the King of Spain.

After the fall of the Aztec Empire, Cortés built Mexico City over the destroyed buildings of the Aztec capital. The Aztec people were forced to work in the mines to gather valuable resources for Spain. Smallpox, a disease brought to the country by Cortés' men, rushed through the native population, killing many. Sixty years after the Valley of Mexico was colonized by Spain, nearly eighty percent of the native population was lost.

The flag of Mexico includes the ancient symbol of the Aztec Empire, an eagle with a snake in its mouth. Mexico City, built on the ruins of the ancient capital, is one of the oldest cities in the Americas. Although conquered, the Aztec Empire continues to have an impact on the country and to make its mark on modern Mexico

13. What is the meaning of **capital** as it is used in the sentence?

The Valley of Mexico, the home of the Aztec Empire, and the **capital** of Tenochtitlán (te-nawch-tee-tlahn), thrived during the 14th and 15th centuries.

14. Why did Mexico include the image of an eagle with a snake in its mouth on its flag?

15. Which characteristics of Hernán Cortés are contrasted with Moctezuma II in "The End of the Aztec Empire"?

16. What was Hernán Cortez' role in the Aztec Empire?

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17. What is central idea of “The End of the Aztec Empire”?

18. Which sentence from “The End of the Aztec Empire” is used to support the idea that the Aztec Empire thrived during the 14th and 15th centuries?

19. What event caused the greatest number of deaths among the native people of the Aztec Empire?

20. What is the meaning of **at the hands of** in the sentence?

In 1519, however, this thriving empire began to decline **at the hands of** Spanish conquerors and Hernán Cortés

21. How the two opening paragraphs fit into the overall structure of “The End of the Aztec Empire”.

22. What is the purpose of “The End of the Aztec Empire”?

23. What is the author’s point of view (perspective) concerning Cortes in “The End of the Aztec Empire”?

24. Compare and contrast: How is the excerpt from “The Life of Hernan Cortes” different from “The End of the Aztec Empire”?

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Constructed Response (2 points)

25. What is the purpose of the first paragraph of “The End of the Aztec Empire”?

Checklist

The student produces a response that achieves the following:

- The response addresses the question completely.
- The response correctly addresses the question and is developed with at least two appropriate details from the passage

Address the question completely	
Two appropriate details from the passage	

26. How does the author of “Moctezuma II” use the historical information found in “The End of the Aztec Empire” to inform the writing?

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- **Extended Constructed Response (4 points)**

Based on the events described in “The End of the Aztec Empire” and “Moctezuma II,” tell the story of Hernán Cortés’s arrival to the city of Tenochtitlán from Cortés’s point of view.

Extended Constructed Response Checklist

*The student’s response is a well-developed narrative that fully develops a real or imagined experience based on text as a stimulus **

- Establish a context and introduce a narrator and/or characters.
- Organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
- Use ideas and details from the passage.
- Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, description, and pacing, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
- Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and to signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.
- Provide a conclusion that follows from the experiences or events
- Integrates ideas and details from source material effectively
- Has very few or no errors in usage and/or conventions that interfere with meaning

Narrator/characters	
Point of View	
Events (Include ideas from the passage)	
Transitional words/phrases	
Conclusion	