



Shorts 6: Family Films

STUDY GUIDE

Content written by **Patricia Juri**.

Designed by **Ankoo Patel, Camille Gwise** and **Keith Zwolfer**

All SFFILM Education materials are developed in alignment with California educational standards for media literacy. SFFILM Education welcomes feedback and questions on all printed study materials.



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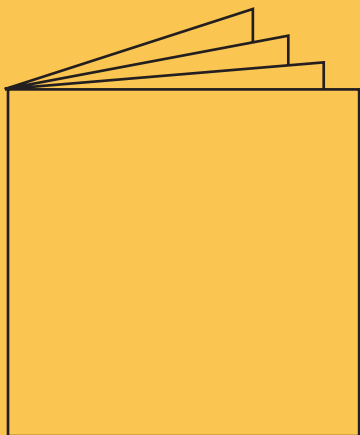
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About the Films

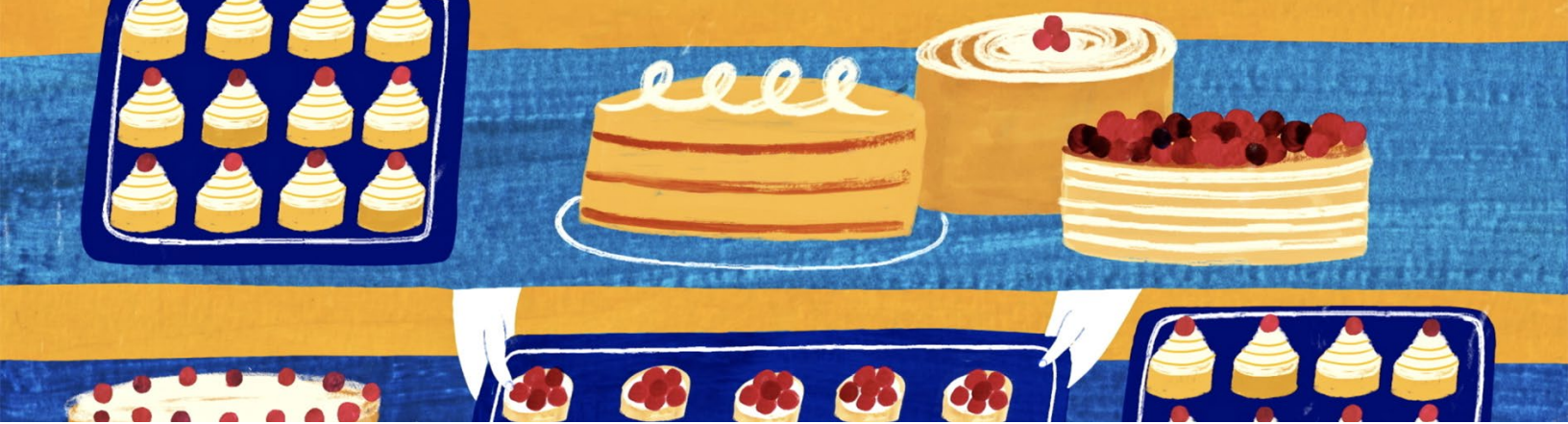
Connection to ourselves and our communities are at the heart of these family films. Join us as we wonder: What makes us unique? How are we defined in our own lives and to others? This captivating collection of animated, documentary, and narrative shorts spans the globe, and outer space. Taking us from the moon's surface to the sacred lands of the Navajo Nation, each story presents moments of deep connection in unexpected ways.

Teaching the Film

Creative storytelling makes deep connections to learning, and stirs the imagination. These guides provide exposure to beautiful stories, concepts and worlds, and inspires deep conversation after. Join us as we travel to places that introduce us to the stories of past, the present and future and fantastical!

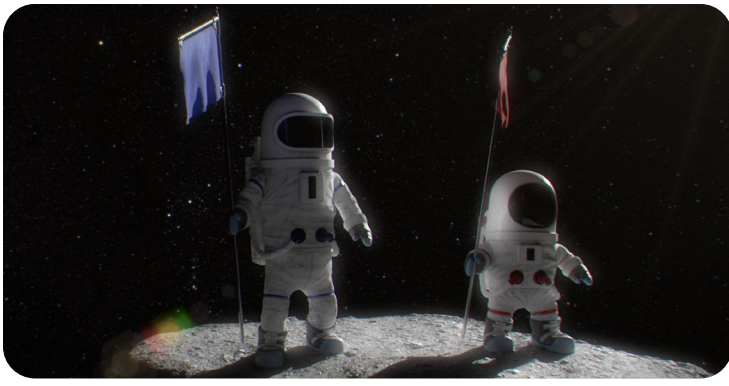
Subject Areas

- **African American Studies**
- **Social Emotional Growth and Development**
- **English Language Arts**
- **Mindfulness Studies**
- **Performing Arts/Music Studies.**



Discussion Questions

1. Which film in this series was your favorite? Why?
2. Which film in this series was your least favorite? Why?
3. Which film in this series do you think was the most challenging to make? Why?
4. The films incorporate a wide range of storytelling styles, from documentary to animation to narrative fiction.
 - Which film's style was most interesting to you?
 - What techniques did it use that set it apart from other films?
5. Which film made you want to be part of it? Why?
 - Which character would you want to be?
 - How would you change the film to end with your own ending?
6. Which film touched your heart and made you think?
 - What part made you feel connected to it?
 - Do the characters or situation remind you of anything?
7. Which character would you take out of one short and insert into another short?
 - What would they see, do, or say?
 - How would you change the film?
8. What was your least favorite film? Why? Be specific: was it too sad, too slow?
 - As a director, what would you change?
 - As an editor, what would you take out of the film?
 - As a writer, what would you write into the film to make it more likeable in your opinion?
9. Which character would you want to sit next to in class? Why? What do they think they would bring in their lunchbox for lunch?
10. What words would you use to describe this series as a whole? What common themes can you find? Do you think these films were interesting to watch together? Did any seem out of place?
11. Did you enjoy the Family Films series? What more do you want to know about these films? What questions do you have about how they were made?



Spacerace 2021

Spacerace 2021 tells an out of this world story about two explorers who are united in a quest to define excellence. Competing in a moonscape and exploring the boundaries of connection and friendship, they entertain and delight with their anti-gravity antics and realize that winning it all alone is not as enticing as sharing space together.

What did you think was going to come out of the rocket?

Why do you think the flag is red?

Why do you think the red flag astronaut was mad? How could you tell?

Do you think there was enough space on the moon for both astronauts? Why or why not?

What did they do to try to "win" the space?

Did the peaceful music match the battle? How would you have written the music?

Could they have settled the Space race in a different way? How?

What do you think the astronauts looked like behind the face shields? Draw a picture.

Do you think Red was happier at the end? Why or why not?



Mr. Spam Gets a New Hat

A delightful, surreal animation film that tickles your imagination with animated objects, and fantastical settings. This story, told in old time silent film style comedy, Mr Spam, Ms. Dot and Spot the dog work together to find a way to navigate the difficulties of work, home, and personal life so that they all feel fulfilled without sacrificing their heart's fulfillment. They help each other see the true meaning of having to ask what truly makes you happy, and seek the strength to encourage each other to pursue it.

Define the words: Clever, Charming, Tinker, Shy, Talented, Doodad, Drat

Draw an upside down hat and fill it with 5 things you dream of having.

What was unique about his dog, Spot?

How do Mr Spam and Spot dress alike?

If you could have a kitchen like them, what would it make you for your breakfast?

What would you name the little robot that he makes? What special power does it have?

What did Ms. Dot like to draw?

How does the music let you know how Mr. Spam feels about his workplace?

How does it sound? What is his job?

You should never hit a head with a hammer. Why do you think his magic hat protected his brain? Was it made with something special?

How did Ms. Dot know Mr. Spam needed her?

How did they change the hammer factory into something unique?



Mama has a Mustache

Kids and adults alike will enjoy this brightly colored and spontaneously silly animated movie created by and for families with fun characters. Children answer questions around gender identity, conformity and nonconformity, self awareness, and illustrates what loving support of families looks, feels, and sounds like.

What does a Mama look like in your mind?

What did you like about the way that the stop motion movie is shown?

What do you call your family members? Do you have any silly or fun nicknames for them?

Do you ever feel different than how other kids expect you to act or play? How?

Do you think colors should only be worn by certain people? Why or why not?

Do you think it's okay for each person to choose their own clothes and fashion sense? Why?

Is it okay for people to ask what people's pronouns are?

Trace your hand. Then write inside the fingers:
5 things you are good at, or 5 things you like about yourself!



Trails before Us

Trails before us is a film that details the land and Earth in and around the First People's history. It chronicles the way that trails were used long ago to determine destinations, and also brought people together to coexist sharing the land. Modern day youth of the area still explore these trails in different ways, but always with the same intention of connection and respect for the land, history and people.

Why did people use the trails in the past? What was the trail called?

How is Nigel riding his bike like the people who used to ride the trails on horses in the past?

Is a horse like a bike? Why and why not?

Which do you think is harder to ride in the mountains: bike or horse? Why?

Describe the area in 3 sentences. What does the land look like?

What pieces of safety equipment are important for mountain biking?

How is mountain biking different than riding on a street?

Draw your dream bike. Give it a name, and label all the parts.

If your bike could take you to any place, where would you go and what would you do?



Dream Carriers

A beautiful film about migration, family and carrying your stories with you. In this film, you hear the inner thoughts of many migrants who have had to move from one place to another like the migration of the Monarch across man made borders. The butterflies and the people leave one place for another in order to thrive and survive. Like the evolution from caterpillar to butterfly, we follow the characters through home to new home, hearing the challenges faced by all creatures who strive for a new place to land and grow.

- What do Monarch butterflies look like? Draw a picture.
- What are the life cycles of the Monarch?
- How is the family's life changing as they move to new places?
- What activities do you see the family doing together?
- What are traditions that YOU do with your family that make you feel connected?
- What dreams do you have that you would like to tell people about when you are old?



Intervals

This yummy film explores delicious creativity in the setting of a bakeshop. Watch and discover the up close perspectives of a talented chef who desires to make the most perfect creations for themselves and the customers. Perspective shifting close ups and fantasy scenarios of shrinking into miniature allow every kid's fantasy of being able to dive into your favorite dessert.

- What type of business do you see the people working in?
- What types of things do you like to make as treats?
- If you could shrink down and run through your favorite dessert, what would you be slipping and sliding through?
- How does the chef feel when the dessert is finished?



Battery Daddy

This sweet film, created with beautiful soft colors and felt animation tells the tale of Battery Daddy, who is constantly providing support to a family in the house. A myriad of scenarios are given where Battery Daddy swoops in and lends a hand, and some power to help the family through regular scheduling tasks, and even emergency situations, all while being soft and fuzzy.

Why does Battery Daddy need to help them with different things around the house?

What do they take the battery out of and use in different ways?

What happens if a battery gets wet? Do you think it will still work?

How does Battery Daddy save the day?

What types of things do you like to use that need batteries to work?



‘Ohana and ‘Āina: Connecting Family, Farming, and Freedom

A research project in high school leads a young Hawaiian to do some research about the land and agricultures of the first people living there. She learns about the ecology and environment, and how the needs and adapted diets of colonizing people changed the land, and the people’s diet based on commercial enterprise. She explores her own family history, and traces the connection to horticulture and strives to bring attention to her culture by introducing others to the traditions and ways of her ancestors in modern times.

Where is the setting of the film?

What do you know about the island of Hawaii?

What are Ti leaves used for?

What did her grandfather grow on his ranch? Have you ever seen or eaten any of these plants?

What things do you need to do to take care of a plant?

What does Ohana mean?

Farmers are trying to rebuild fields for native crops. What crops would you grow in your community to help feed the people?

Watch the video and write down the steps it takes to create a sustainable garden.

Research your own family traditional recipes. What ingredients would you need to grow a garden, plotting the rows of ingredients you would need for the dish.



The Ocean Duck

This whimsical tale shares the importance of family recipes and the creating memories around these being passed down so that memories continue to be made. A Grandmother and Granddaughter take care of each other through different phases of their lifetimes, proving that care and lovingkindness is a taught attribute, and one that transcends time.

Why do you think they are making a cake? What is your favorite cake to eat?

What are some challenges a duck would encounter if it was raised by chickens?

How are ducks and chickens different?

How are a duck and a chicken similar?

When Sala was younger, her Bebe took care of her and helped her learn how to make the cake. How did Sala take care of her Bebe later?

Do you cook with anyone in your family? If yes, what do you make and with whom? Write down the steps and ingredients to your family dish.



What is Animation?

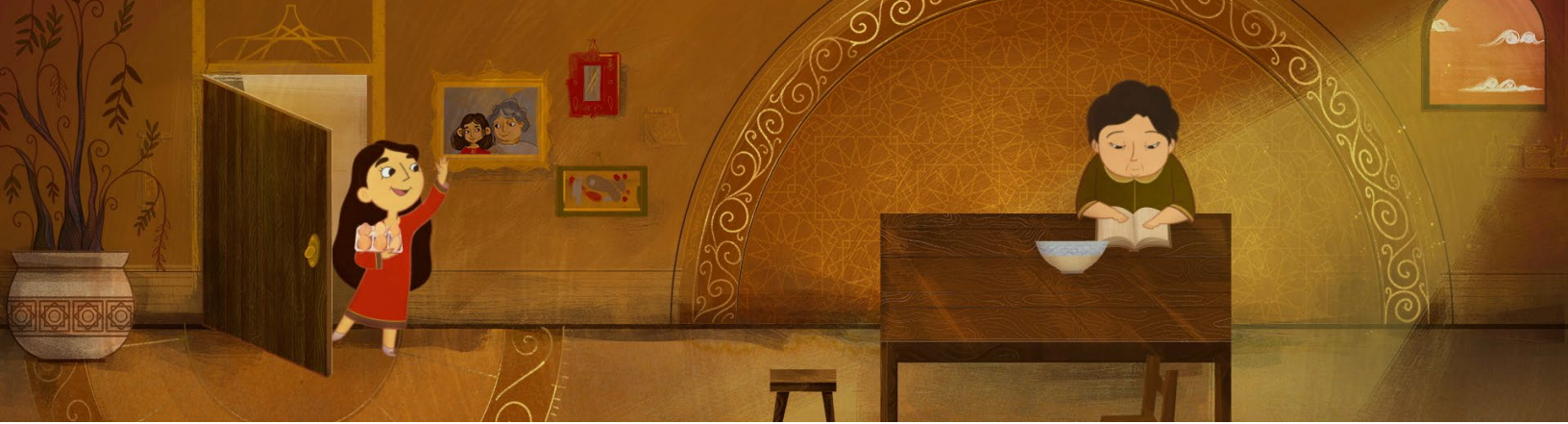
Animation is a process used to create motion pictures through the combination of still images (e.g., digital graphics, photographs of drawings, photographs of objects, etc.) which, when played in sequence, create the illusion of movement. All television cartoons, for example, are animations, and are made up of thousands of still images (drawn by hand or on a computer) that are played sequentially, along with a soundtrack, to tell a story.

TYPES OF ANIMATION

- Classic animation
(e.g., Disney's **The Lion King**, most TV cartoons)
- Rotoscope
(e.g., **Star Wars** lightsabers)
- Flip books
- 3D animation
(e.g., Pixar's **Toy Story**, **Wall-E**, **Up**)
- Stereoscopic 3D
(e.g., **Avatar**)
- Cut-out / Silhouette animation
(e.g., **South Park**)
- Claymation
(e.g., Nick Park's **Wallace and Gromit**)
- Puppet animation
(e.g., Tim Burton's **The Nightmare Before Christmas**, **Coraline**)

History of Animation

The world's most famous animator, Walt Disney, began making short animated cartoons based on children's stories in 1923. In 1928 he introduced Mickey Mouse in the first animated sound cartoon, **Steamboat Willie**, which became an immediate sensation. Throughout the next decade, Disney would add such elements as carefully synchronized music (**The Skeleton Dance**, 1929), Technicolor (**Flowers and Trees**, 1932), and the illusion of depth with his multi-plane camera (**The Old Mill**, 1937), a device that allowed for animated cells to be photographed against a three-dimensional background. Although not the first animated feature, **Disney's Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs** (1937) was the first to use up-to-the-minute techniques and the first to receive widespread release. The film's success can be attributed in part to Disney's willingness to use animation to create a profound dramatic experience. He strove for photographic realism in films such as **Pinocchio** (1940), **Dumbo** (1941) and **Bambi** (1942). The success of television cartoons led to the virtual disappearance of animated shorts produced for theatrical release. Animated featurelength films, however, flourished, especially after the release of Disney's **The Little Mermaid** (1989), regarded by many as the studio's best animated feature in decades. Other Disney blockbusters followed, including **Beauty and the Beast** (1991), **Aladdin** (1992), **The Lion King** (1994) and **Lilo & Stitch** (2002). The development of computer animation was another great advancement in the form and resulted in feature films of astounding visual sumptuousness. In 1995, **Toy Story** was the first film to use only computer generated imagery (CGI). In 2001 the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences added a new Academy Award for Best Animated Feature Film. The first recipient of the award was **Shrek** (2001).



Media Literacy Resources: Screening with Meaning

We live in a world where technology mediates a large portion of human interaction and the exchange of information. Every projected image, every word published on a page or a website, and every sound from a speaker reaches its audience through the medium, through the language of the device. The ability to parse the vast array of media messages is an essential skill for young people, particularly in a mainstream commercial culture that targets youth as a vulnerable, impressionable segment of the American marketplace. Most students already have a keen understanding of the languages different media use and the techniques they employ to inspire particular emotions or reactions, but they often lack the skill or awareness to fully deconstruct the messages they continuously receive. Analysis of a media message—or any piece of mass media content—can best be accomplished by first identifying its principal characteristics:

1. **Medium:** the physical means by which it is contained and/or delivered
2. **Author:** the person(s) responsible for its creation and dissemination
3. **Content:** the information, emotions, values or ideas it conveys
4. **Audience:** the target audience to whom it is delivered
5. **Purpose:** the objectives of its authors and the effects of its dissemination.

Students who can readily identify these five core characteristics will be equipped to understand the incentives at work behind media messages, as well as their potential consequences. Media literacy education empowers students to become responsible consumers, active citizens and critical thinkers.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

MEDIUM

All Media Is Constructed.

- What is the message, how is it delivered and in what format?
- What technologies are used to present the message?
- What visual and auditory elements comprise the media content?
- What expectations do you bring to the content, given its medium and format?

AUTHOR

All Media Is Constructed by Someone.

- Who is delivering the message?
- Who originally constructed the message?
- What expectations do you have of the content, given its author(s)?

CONTENT

Media Is A Language For Information.

- What is the subject of the media message?
- What information, values, emotions or ideas are conveyed by the media content?
- What tools does the author employ to engage the viewer and evoke a response?
- To what extent did the content meet your expectations, given the format/author?

AUDIENCE

All Media Messages Reach an Audience.

- Who receives the message?
- For whom is the message intended?
- What is the public reaction to the media content and/or its message?
- What is your reaction to the media content and/or its message?
- How might others perceive this message differently? Why?

PURPOSE

All Media Messages Are Constructed for a Reason.

- Why was the message constructed?
- Who benefits from dissemination of the message? How?
- To what extent does the message achieve its purpose?
- What effect does the message have on the audience it reaches, if any?



Common Core Standards

Standards Grades 3–8

COMPREHENSION AND COLLABORATION

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.1

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 3 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.2

Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2.A

Introduce a topic and group related information together; include illustrations when useful to aiding comprehension.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2.B

Develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.3

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.3.A

Establish a situation and introduce a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.3.B

Use dialogue and descriptions of actions, thoughts, and feelings to develop experiences and events or show the response of characters to situations.

4th Grade Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2.B

Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2.D

Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.3

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.3

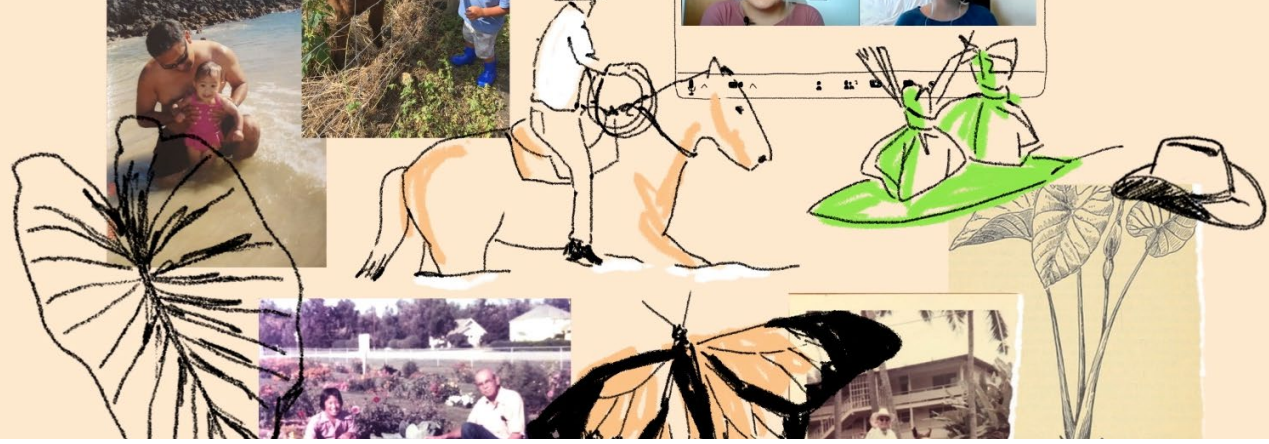
Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.3.A

Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.3.B

Use dialogue and description to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.



Common Core Standards (Cont.)

Grades 6–8

CRAFT AND STRUCTURE

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.5

Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.6

Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

RESEARCH TO BUILD AND PRESENT KNOWLEDGE:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.7

Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.2

Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.2.B

Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.2.C

Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.2.D

Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.