



Dynamic Learning Maps English Language Arts Initial and Distal Precursors 6th Grade

This English Language Arts resource provides teachers with enhanced descriptions of the Initial and Distal precursors for the most frequently used Essential Elements.

By providing a clear connection between the IP or DP linkage level and the Target linkage level, teachers can better tailor classroom instruction for each student. Additionally, links to instructional information for each Essential Element and familiar texts in ELA, make these handy classroom resources.

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ELA.EE.RL.6.1

ELA.EE.RL.6.1 Determine what a text says explicitly as well as what simple inferences must be drawn.

Link to Minimap:

http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/sites/default/files/documents/ELA_EEs/ELA.EE.RL.6.1.pdf

Target | Can analyze a narrative and differentiate between explicitly-stated information and implications in the text that require an inference.

Proximal Precursor

Can identify the concrete details, such as characters, objects, setting, and major events that are specifically stated in a narrative text.

Distal Precursor:

Can identify the key elements in a story, including the main characters, setting, and the major events.

Initial Precursor:

Can differentiate between text and pictures. Can pair an object with a picture, tactile graphic, or other symbolic representation of the object.

How is the Initial Precursor related to the target?

Initial Precursor: Understanding what a text says explicitly requires students attend to the specific words and illustrations or tactual information presented in a text. Students working at the Initial Precursor linkage level can begin to work on this during repeated shared reading of DLM Familiar Texts aligned with this linkage level. These texts include photos, tactile graphics, or objects that match the text to provide numerous opportunities for students to learn to differentiate between the text and the pictures/tactile graphics and begin matching pictures or objects with the words or other symbols they represent.

How is the Distal Precursor related to the target?

Distal Precursor: Learning to determine what a text says explicitly and making simple inferences about a text requires students to identify the key elements or details. Students working at the Distal Precursor linkage level can work on this during repeated shared readings of DLM Familiar Texts aligned with this linkage level. These texts are written with clearly identified story elements (e.g., characters, settings, events) that students can learn to identify over time.

ELA.EE.RL.6.2

ELA.EE.RL.6.2 Identify details in a text that are related to the theme or central idea.

Link to Minimap:

http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/sites/default/files/documents/ELA_EEs/ELA.EE.RL.6.2.pdf

Target | Can determine the details that provide for the foundation of the theme in a narrative.

Proximal Precursor

Can identify what the overall goal or main idea of a single episode is in a narrative by inferring from the characters, settings, and actions.

Distal Precursor:

Can identify elements in a story (characters, other key details in the text) when asked.

Initial Precursor:

Can pair an object with a picture, tactile graphic, or other symbolic representation of the object.

How is the Initial Precursor related to the target?

Initial Precursor: Understanding what a text says explicitly requires students to attend to the specific words and illustrations or tactual information that is presented in a text. Students working at the Initial Precursor level can begin to work on this during repeated shared reading of DLM Familiar Texts aligned with this linkage level. These texts include photos, tactile graphics, or objects that match the text to provide numerous opportunities for students to learn to match pictures or objects with the words or other symbols they represent.

How is the Distal Precursor related to the target?

Distal Precursor: Identifying details in a story that relate to the theme or central idea requires readers to identify the details. Students working at the Distal Precursor linkage level can learn to identify the details or elements of stories during repeated shared readings of DLM Familiar Texts aligned with this linkage level. These texts are written with clearly identified story elements (e.g., characters, settings, events) that students can learn to identify over time.

ELA.EE.RL.6.3

ELA.EE.RL.6.3 Can identify how a character responds to a challenge in a story.

Link to Minimap:

http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/sites/default/files/documents/ELA_EEs/ELA.EE.RL.6.3.pdf

Target | Student can correctly identify how a character responds to a challenge that is presented within a story.

Proximal Precursor

Can identify how a character's actions make them feel OR can identify how the character's desires or feelings lead to an action.

Distal Precursor:

Student can identify the explicitly-stated actions of characters in a story.

Initial Precursor:

Can perform requested actions on objects. ("Kiss it. Throw it.")

How is the Initial Precursor related to the target?

Initial Precursor: Understanding the actions a character takes or the way a character responds to a challenge requires students to understand actions. At the Initial Precursor level, students are working to demonstrate their understanding of basic action words that appear in texts. During repeated shared readings, teachers can help students interact with objects that relate to the book and perform actions with those objects. For example, the DLM Familiar Texts that are aligned with this linkage level are situated in familiar settings (e.g., home, school, neighborhood) and include clearly described objects and actions. Teachers can gather the objects named in the book and use them during repeated shared readings to help students begin to understand the actions of characters in the story.

How is the Distal Precursor related to the target?

Distal Precursor: Understanding the way a character responds to a challenge that is presented in a story requires students to identify the actions of characters. Students working at the Distal Precursor linkage level are working to identify the actions of characters that are explicitly stated and often illustrated in familiar stories. The DLM Familiar Texts aligned with this Essential Element and linkage level highlight characters and the actions they perform. Teachers can use these and other books in repeated shared reading to help students become familiar with the story, the characters, and the actions characters perform. Teachers might support students in acting out the things characters do or might show them what the actions look like as they occur in the book.

ELA.EE.RL.6.4

ELA.EE.RL.6.4 Determine how word choice changes the meaning in a text.

Link to Minimap:

http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/sites/default/files/documents/ELA_EEs/ELA.EE.RL.6.4.pdf

Target | Can ascertain how the meaning of a narrative is influenced by the author's choice of words.

Proximal Precursor

Can understand that words might have a slightly different meaning or use depending on the specific context in which they are used.

Distal Precursor:

Can demonstrate an understanding of words with opposite meanings (e.g., cold, hot, up, down).

Initial Precursor:

Can demonstrate understanding of property words.

How is the Initial Precursor related to the target?

Initial Precursor: Determining how word choice changes the meaning of text requires students to learn many different words and the way they are used in different contexts. Students working at the Initial Precursor linkage level can work toward this by learning about words that describe things. Teachers can help students work on this through repeated shared reading of DLM Familiar Texts aligned with this linkage level. These texts include words that describe the settings, people, and events. Teachers can encourage students to identify the settings, people, and events that are associated with the describing words as they are encountered during each reading.

How is the Distal Precursor related to the target?

Distal Precursor: Determining how word choice changes the meaning of text requires students to learn many different words and the way they are used in different contexts. One example is learning to recognize words that have opposite meanings. Teachers can help students learn to recognize these words through repeated shared readings of DLM Familiar Texts aligned with this linkage level. These texts intentionally include pairs of words that are opposites that students can learn to identify over time.

ELA.EE.RL.6.5

ELA.EE.RL.6.5 Determine the structure of a text (e.g., story, poem, or drama).

Link to Minimap:

http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/sites/default/files/documents/ELA_EEs/ELA.EE.RL.6.5.pdf

Target | Student can use information about structure to make determinations about what comes next in a text.

Proximal Precursor

Can determine the events that come at the beginning, middle, and end of a narrative containing a clear and linear text structure.

Distal Precursor:

Can identify elements in a story (characters, other key details in the text) when asked.

Initial Precursor:

Can recognize when he or she encounters familiar people, objects, places, and events.

How is the Initial Precursor related to the target?

Initial Precursor: Determining the structure of a text requires readers to recognize when something new or different is happening. This depends on students being able to identify when they encounter things that are familiar, as well. Teachers can work on this during repeated shared reading of DLM Familiar Texts aligned with this linkage level because these texts are written about familiar routines that include familiar people, objects, places and events. Teachers can ask students to indicate when one of these familiar text details appears during the shared reading interaction.

How is the Distal Precursor related to the target?

Distal Precursor: All text comprehension begins with being able to identify details in the text. Readers then use these details to support more complex understandings. Students working at the Distal Precursor linkage level are working on identifying the elements in stories, poems, dramas, and other texts they read with teachers. During shared reading interactions, teachers can ask students to indicate when a specific character or other text element appears in the text.

ELA.EE.RL.6.6

ELA.EE.RL.6.6 Identify words or phrases in the text that describe or show what the narrator or speaker is thinking or feeling.

Link to Minimap:

http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/sites/default/files/documents/ELA_EEs/ELA.EE.RL.6.6.pdf

Target | Can describe what the narrator or current speaker is thinking or feeling by identifying relevant words or phrases, such as "I ruminated on the missed opportunity at catching the thief on that fateful night at the mansion."

Proximal Precursor

Can determine who the narrator is in a story he or she is reading.

Distal Precursor:

Can identify the feelings of specific characters in narratives.

Initial Precursor:

Can recognize when he or she encounters familiar people, objects, places, and events.

How is the Initial Precursor related to the target?

Initial Precursor: As students work toward understanding how characters and narrators think and feel, they have to learn to recognize the familiar people, objects, places, and events that make them think and feel in different ways. Teachers can help students work toward those understandings during repeated shared reading of DLM Familiar Texts aligned with this linkage level. These texts are written about familiar routines that include familiar people, objects, places, and events. Teachers can ask students to indicate when one of these familiar text details appears during the shared reading interaction.

How is the Distal Precursor related to the target?

Distal Precursor: Identifying words that describe or show what the narrator or speaker is thinking or feeling requires students to be able to identify when the feelings of characters are referenced specifically in a text. Teachers can help students learn this using DLM Familiar Texts aligned with the Distal Precursor linkage level. These stories refer explicitly to the ways characters are feeling and give teachers a repeated opportunity to ask students to listen for specific words that tell how a specific character is feeling.

ELA.EE.RI.6.1

ELA.EE.RI.6.1 Analyze a text to determine what it says explicitly as well as what inferences should be drawn.

Link to Minimap:

http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/sites/default/files/documents/ELA_EEs/ELA.EE.RI.6.1.pdf

Target | Can analyze an informational text and differentiate between explicitly-stated information and implications in the text that require an inference.

Proximal Precursor

Able to identify explicit details in an informational text.

Distal Precursor:

Can identify illustrations or tactile graphics/objects that reflect aspects of a familiar text, such as setting, characters, or action if it is a story or a person, place, thing, or idea if it is an informational text.

Initial Precursor:

Can differentiate between text and pictures. Can pair an object with a picture, tactile graphic, or other symbolic representation of the object.

How is the Initial Precursor related to the target?

Initial Precursor: Understanding what a text says explicitly requires students to begin to attend to the specific words and illustrations or tactual information that is presented in a text. Students working at the Initial Precursor linkage level can begin to work on this during repeated shared reading of DLM Familiar Texts aligned with this linkage level. These texts include photos, tactile graphics, or objects that match the text to provide numerous opportunities for students to learn to differentiate between the text and the pictures/tactile graphics and begin matching pictures or objects with the words or other symbols they represent.

How is the Distal Precursor related to the target?

Distal Precursor: Understanding the inferences that are needed to comprehend a text requires students to understand the ways specific words and illustrations or tactual information are related. Students working at the Distal Precursor linkage level can work to develop these understandings during repeated shared readings of DLM Familiar Texts aligned with this linkage level. These texts include illustrations or tactile graphics/objects that are associated with the content of the text. During repeated shared reading of these texts, teachers can work with students to begin identifying the illustrations or tactile graphics/objects that match different portions of the text.

ELA.EE.RI.6.2

ELA.EE.RI.6.2 Determine the main idea of a passage and details or facts related to it.

Link to Minimap:

http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/sites/default/files/documents/ELA_EEs/ELA.EE.RI.6.2.pdf

Target | Can determine which details contained within a paragraph of an informational text provide an important contribution to the paragraph's main idea.

Proximal Precursor

Can determine which details in a paragraph of an informational text are important.

Distal Precursor:

Can identify the concrete details, such as individuals, events, or ideas in familiar informational texts.

Initial Precursor:

Can demonstrate a receptive understanding of the property words that describe the objects that accompany familiar games or routines.

How is the Initial Precursor related to the target?

Initial Precursor: Determining the details that contribute to the main idea of a text requires students to develop early understandings of the relationship between words and their use. Students at the Initial Precursor level can work on understanding early relationships by identifying objects based on description or property words used to describe them. Teachers can help students develop this understanding through repeated shared reading of texts like the DLM Familiar Texts that align with this linkage level and feature familiar routines. During these repeated shared readings, teachers can highlight the routines in the book and the objects that are used in the routines while helping students distinguish among items based on descriptive or property words that describe them.

How is the Distal Precursor related to the target?

Distal Precursor: Determining the details that contribute to the main idea of a text requires students to identify and remember the details in a text. Teachers can help students learn to identify the concrete details in texts by starting with repeated shared readings that help students become familiar with books. Using texts like the DLM Familiar Texts that align with this linkage level, teachers can help students learn to identify the details in a familiar text.

ELA.EE.RI.6.3

ELA.EE.RI.6.3 Identify a detail that elaborates upon individuals, events, or ideas introduced in a text.

Link to Minimap:

http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/sites/default/files/documents/ELA_EEs/ELA.EE.RI.6.3.pdf

Target | Can determine when specific details provided in an informational text expand and elaborate on other details in the same text.

Proximal Precursor

Can determine whether a concrete detail is related to an individual, event, or idea discussed in an informational text.

Distal Precursor:

Can provide real-life examples of words connected to a use (describe people who are friendly).

Initial Precursor:

Can determine some of the relevant words for describing people, places, things, or events familiar to the student.

How is the Initial Precursor related to the target?

Initial Precursor: Determining which details elaborate on other details in a text requires students to understand that some words describe or elaborate on others. Students working at the Initial Precursor level can work toward this understanding by identifying words that describe people, places, things, or events in familiar texts. Teachers can support this through repeated shared readings of books like the DLM Familiar Texts. The DLM Familiar Texts aligned with this linkage level focus on familiar contexts and include descriptions of the people, objects, places, and events associated with the context.

How is the Distal Precursor related to the target?

Distal Precursor: As students learn to identify words that describe the people, places, things, or events that appear in familiar texts, they can work toward extending that understanding to the ways words can be used to describe things in everyday life. Teachers can support this through shared reading of texts about topics that use familiar words to describe people, places, things, or events in the story. During these shared readings, teachers can help students connect the words in the text to their real-life experiences.

ELA.EE.RI.6.4

ELA.EE.RI.6.4 Determine how word choice changes the meaning of a text.

Link to Minimap:

http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/sites/default/files/documents/ELA_EEs/ELA.EE.RI.6.4.pdf

Target | Can ascertain how the meaning of an informational text is altered by the specific word choices the author makes.

Proximal Precursor

Can understand that words might have a slightly different meaning or use depending on the specific context in which they are used.

Distal Precursor:

Can demonstrate an understanding of words with opposite meanings (e.g., cold, hot, up, down).

Initial Precursor:

Can demonstrate a receptive understanding of the property words that describe the objects that accompany familiar games or routines.

How is the Initial Precursor related to the target?

Initial Precursor: Determining how word choice changes the meaning of text requires students to learn many different words and the way they are used in different contexts. Students working at the Initial Precursor linkage level can work toward this by learning about words that describe things. Teachers can help students work on this through repeated shared reading of DLM Familiar Texts aligned with this linkage level. These texts include words that describe the routines, objects, and contexts of the texts. Teachers can encourage students to identify when they hear these words during shared reading.

How is the Distal Precursor related to the target?

Distal Precursor: Determining how word choice changes the meaning of text requires students to learn many different words and the way they are used in different contexts. One example is learning to recognize words that have opposite meanings. Teachers can help students learn to recognize these words through repeated shared readings of DLM Familiar Texts aligned with this linkage level. These texts intentionally include pairs of words that are opposites that students can learn to identify over time.

ELA.EE.RI.6.5

ELA.EE.RI.6.5 Determine how the title fits the structure of the text.

Link to Minimap:

http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/sites/default/files/documents/ELA_EEs/ELA.EE.RI.6.5.pdf

Target | Can understand how the title indicates information about or fits the structure of an informational text.

Proximal Precursor

Can determine if an informational text is providing information about events, giving directions, or providing information on a topic.

Distal Precursor:

Can identify the concrete details, such as individuals, events, or ideas in familiar informational texts.

Initial Precursor:

Demonstrates receptive understanding of the action words that accompany familiar games or routines.

How is the Initial Precursor related to the target?

Initial Precursor: Determining how the title fits the structure of a text requires that students understand relationships between two or more things. Students at the Initial Precursor level can work on understanding early relationships by identifying action words that accompany familiar routines. Teachers can help students develop this understanding through repeated shared reading of texts like the DLM Familiar Texts that align with this linkage level. During these repeated shared readings, teachers can highlight the routines in the book and name and/or act out actions that go with the routines.

How is the Distal Precursor related to the target?

Distal Precursor: Determining how the title fits the structure of a text requires students to be able to identify details in the text that ultimately define the structure. Teachers can help students working at the Distal Precursor linkage level learn to identify the concrete details in familiar texts through repeated shared readings. Using texts like the DLM Familiar Texts that align with this linkage level, teachers can build student familiarity with the details in the text.

ELA.EE.RI.6.6

ELA.EE.RI.6.6 Identify words or phrases in the text that describe or show the author's point of view.

Link to Minimap:

http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/sites/default/files/documents/ELA_EEs/ELA.EE.RI.6.6.pdf

Target | Can identify words or phrases for determining the point of view of an informational text's author.

Proximal Precursor

Can identify the relationship between multiple concrete facts or details in a literature or informational text.

Distal Precursor:

Can identify the concrete details, such as individuals, events, or ideas in familiar informational texts.

Initial Precursor:

Can demonstrate a receptive understanding of the property words that describe the objects that accompany familiar games or routines.

How is the Initial Precursor related to the target?

Initial Precursor: Identifying words or phrases that describe the author's point of view requires students to learn many different words and the way they are used in different contexts. Students working at the Initial Precursor linkage level can work toward this by learning about words that describe things. Teachers can help students work on this through repeated shared reading of DLM Familiar Texts aligned with this linkage level. These texts include words that describe the routines, objects, and contexts of the texts. Teachers can encourage students to identify when they hear these words during shared reading.

How is the Distal Precursor related to the target?

Distal Precursor: As students work toward identifying words or phrases that describe the author's point of view, they have to learn to identify the concrete details in a text that will eventually support their understanding of the author's point of view. Teachers can work on this during repeated shared reading of DLM Familiar Texts aligned with this linkage level. These texts are about familiar contexts and specifically identify concrete details related to the contexts. Teachers can help students learn to identify these details as they engage with students in reading and discussing the DLM Familiar Texts.

ELA.EE.RI.6.8

ELA.EE.RI.6.8 Distinguish claims in a text supported by reason.

Link to Minimap:

http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/sites/default/files/documents/ELA_EEs/ELA.EE.RI.6.8.pdf

Target | Can distinguish between claims that a speaker or author supports with evidence from those that are not factually supported.

Proximal Precursor

Can determine the details used to defend a claim in a text.

Distal Precursor:

Can identify the details that have some relationship to the topic of a paragraph in an informational text.

Initial Precursor:

Can demonstrate an understanding that objects differ in the physical characteristics and can make judgments of similarity or difference based on the physical characteristics of objects

How is the Initial Precursor related to the target?

Initial Precursor: Distinguishing claims that are and are not supported in a text requires students to understand things that are and are not related to one another. Students working at the Initial Precursor linkage level can work toward this understanding by learning to identify descriptive words that do and do not describe objects and to use the descriptions of two or more objects to decide if they are the same or different. Teachers can support this through repeated shared reading of DLM Familiar Texts aligned with this linkage level. These texts feature familiar contexts and describe the people, objects, places, and events in ways that highlight their similarities and differences.

How is the Distal Precursor related to the target?

Distal Precursor: Distinguishing claims that are and are not supported in a text requires students to be able to identify the details in the text that are related to a claim. As students work toward this, they can be supported in learning to identify details that are related to the topic of a text. Teachers can help students learn to do this during shared reading or reading comprehension by identifying the topic of the text and asking students to read or listen to identify the details that relate to that topic.

ELA.EE.L.6.2.b

ELA.EE.L.6.2.b Spell untaught words phonetically, drawing on letter-sound relationships and common spelling patterns.

Link to Minimap:

http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/sites/default/files/documents/ELA_EEs/ELA.EE.L.6.2.b.pdf

Target | Can use letter-sound knowledge to spell words phonetically by including letters that represents sounds from the word.

Proximal Precursor

Can use spelling patterns (e.g., rimes) in familiar words to spell new words.

Distal Precursor:

Can produce a string of letters (student attempts to write words) by combining random letters.

Initial Precursor:

Can recognize the sound of the letter of their first name in words they hear and see, and can correctly represent this letter when spelling words that start with the same letter.

How is the Initial Precursor related to the target?

Initial Precursor: Research suggests that the first letter most children learn to recognize is the first letter of their first name. Over time, they learn to identify and use more letters and eventually associate those letters with sounds in decoding and spelling. Teachers can work on the Initial Precursor skill by asking students to sign their name to their writing each time they write.

How is the Distal Precursor related to the target?

Distal Precursor: As students learn more about selecting topics, generating ideas, and using the alphabet to write, they begin to string together letters into word-like strings. They are not yet demonstrating understanding of letter-sound relationships, but they consistently write or select strings of letters when asked to write about the topics they choose.

ELA.EE.W.6.2.a

ELA.EE.W.6.2.a Introduce a topic and write to convey ideas and information about it including visual, tactual, or multimedia information as appropriate.

Link to Minimap:

http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/sites/default/files/documents/ELA_EEs/ELA.EE.W.6.2.a.pdf

Target | Can introduce an informational topic while writing and extend by writing about ideas and information related to the topic.

Proximal Precursor

Can select a topic for writing an informational text and then find information that is either tactile, visual, or multimedia for use when writing the text.

Distal Precursor:

Can respond to wh-questions regarding choice of topic and other questions related to writing about the topic.

Initial Precursor:

Given a choice of two objects, uses eye-gaze, physical movement, gesture or vocalization to indicate choice.

How is the Initial Precursor related to the target?

Initial Precursor: Selecting and writing about a topic requires students to successfully communicate a choice of topics. In the context of emergent writing, students at the Initial Precursor level can work on clearly communicating a choice between two familiar, preferred objects as a topic for writing. The key here is to practice communicating a choice before writing about the choice rather than communicating a choice during an activity unrelated to writing.

How is the Distal Precursor related to the target?

Distal Precursor: One way to help students learn to write an informational text is to help them brainstorm ideas about the topics they select. Teachers can work on this by asking students to select a topic for writing and then ask them basic questions about the topic. These questions might begin with yes/no personal preference questions, but as students grow more successful, can include the wh-questions that are the focus of this linkage level.

ELA.EE.W.6.2.b

ELA.EE.W.6.2.b Provide facts, details, or other information related to the topic.

Link to Minimap:

http://dynamiclearningmaps.org/sites/default/files/documents/ELA_EEs/ELA.EE.W.6.2.b.pdf

Target | Student is already able to identify facts and details related to topic from a set of choices. Now they are able to provide written facts, details and/or information about a topic.

Proximal Precursor

Can select a topic and use drawing, dictating, or writing to compose a message with at least one fact or detail about the selected topic (message may require some interpretation as student may not be using phonetic spelling or complete simple sentences).

Distal Precursor:

Can identify a photograph or object that is personally relevant to the student from a set of personally relevant and irrelevant photographs or objects and provide a specific detail about it.

Initial Precursor:

Can determine some of the relevant words for describing people, places, things, or events familiar to the student.

How is the Initial Precursor related to the target?

Initial Precursor: Successful writing requires writers to know something about the topic. When students are familiar with the topics they chose, they can begin working to use words that describe the people, places, things, or events that relate to the topic. In the context of writing, teachers can work with students to select from a range of familiar topics and then determine words that could be used to describe the people, places, things, or events they might write about.

How is the Distal Precursor related to the target?

Distal Precursor: Students can work toward being able to identify facts and details that are relevant to a topic and write about them by selecting familiar, personally relevant photographs or objects and identifying details that relate to them. In the context of writing, students at the Distal Precursor level can select from an array of personally relevant pictures or objects when choosing a topic to write about. Then they can determine details about the topic to write about.