

Threads & Themes Grade 6, Unit 2

Investigation 2 Summative Assessment

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class: _____

PASSAGE 1

The Marks of Mastery: How Craft Communities Recognize Their Own —
1090L | Informational

(1) In every culture that has developed a tradition of skilled making, a fundamental question arises: when a practitioner reaches the highest level of their craft, how does a community acknowledge what they have achieved? The answer reveals how societies understand the relationship between individual excellence and collective knowledge. Across centuries and continents, craft communities have developed formal systems for recognizing mastery—systems designed less to celebrate individual talent and more to ensure that rare, accumulated knowledge survives.

(2) In Japan, the government formally acknowledges the custodians of endangered craft traditions through a program established in the mid-twentieth century. Japan’s government designates certain master artisans as Ningen Kokuhō, or Living National Treasures, a title that comes with a government stipend and an expectation that recipients will dedicate themselves to teaching and preservation. The program covers practitioners of arts ranging from silk weaving to lacquerwork to the forging of traditional blades. Recipients of the Ningen Kokuhō designation receive a government stipend that supports their work and recognizes their achievement, but the title carries obligations that extend well beyond personal recognition: each honoree is expected to train successors and document their methods for future generations.

(3) Alongside this formal state system, Japanese craft communities maintain their own internal rituals of recognition. The noren-wake ceremony marks the moment when a master craftsperson formally acknowledges that an apprentice has reached independence. In this ceremony, the master grants the student the right to use the master’s noren—the fabric divider that traditionally hangs in a shop’s doorway—signifying that they are now entitled to establish their own practice and carry the tradition forward under their own name.

(4) In the ancient city of Fez, Morocco, a parallel structure has governed craft recognition for centuries. The asnaf—the city’s organized guilds of craftspeople—serve as both a professional association and a rigorous system of standards enforcement. In Morocco, the asnaf guilds have governed craft production in cities like Fez for centuries, maintaining standards passed from maalem to apprentice. The asnaf do not simply celebrate achievement; they enforce an exacting standard of quality that has remained consistent across generations. The most respected maalem were known not only for their technical precision but for the hospitable manner in which they received young apprentices and shared their knowledge of materials, form, and tradition. In Fez, a master zellige tile-maker who receives recognition from the asnaf guild is understood to carry not just personal skill but a responsibility to the tradition itself.

(5) What connects these systems is not their form but their underlying purpose. Both systems share a common logic: the point of recognition is not only to celebrate an individual but to ensure that the knowledge they carry will survive them. The noren-wake ceremony does more than mark a transition between individuals; it is a formal act of cultural transmission, ensuring that a body of technique survives into the next generation. The same is true of asnaf recognition: a master acknowledged by the guild becomes, in effect, a living collection of accumulated knowledge, with a responsibility to pass it on.

(6) These systems reflect a shared understanding that mastery is not simply a personal achievement—it is a form of stewardship. The most skilled practitioners are recognized not only because they have reached the top of their field, but because, in recognizing them, a community is also celebrating the value of what they carry and ensuring that it will not be lost.

ITEMS — PASSAGE 1

Item 1 — RI.6.1 | Citing textual evidence | DOK 2 | MC

Which detail from the passage BEST supports the idea that craft recognition systems serve a purpose beyond honoring personal achievement?

A) “Across centuries and continents, craft communities have developed formal systems for recognizing mastery.”

B) “The noren-wake ceremony marks the moment when a master craftsman formally acknowledges that an apprentice has reached independence.”

- C) “In Morocco, the asnaf guilds have governed craft production in cities like Fez for centuries, maintaining standards passed from maalem to apprentice.”
- D) “Both systems share a common logic: the point of recognition is not only to celebrate an individual but to ensure that the knowledge they carry will survive them.”

Item 2 — RI.6.2 | Central idea | DOK 2 | MC

Which sentence BEST states the central idea of the passage?

- A) Different cultures have developed distinct but parallel systems for identifying and preserving the knowledge of their most skilled craftspeople.
- B) Programs in Japan have inspired similar recognition systems in countries around the world.
- C) Traditional craft communities face major challenges in maintaining their practices as modern manufacturing replaces handmade goods.
- D) Apprenticeship relationships between masters and students are the most effective method for sharing knowledge across generations.

Item 3 — RI.6.4 | Vocabulary in context | DOK 1 | MC

Read this sentence from paragraph 2.

Japan’s government designates certain master artisans as Ningen Kokuhō, or Living National Treasures, a title that comes with a government stipend and an expectation that recipients will dedicate themselves to teaching and preservation.

As used in paragraph 2, what does the word *designates* mean?

- A) briefly describes
- B) limits
- C) discovers
- D) officially names

Item 4 — RI.6.4 | Vocabulary in context | DOK 2 | MC

Read this sentence from paragraph 4.

The asnaf do not simply celebrate achievement; they enforce an exacting standard of quality that has remained consistent across generations.

Which word is closest in meaning to *exacting* as it is used in this sentence?

- A) strict
- B) tiring
- C) unusual
- D) complicated

Item 5 — L.6.4b | Root words and morphology | DOK 2 | MC

Read this sentence from paragraph 4.

The most respected maalems were known not only for their technical precision but for the hospitable manner in which they received young apprentices and shared their knowledge of materials, form, and tradition.

The word *hospitable* is based on the Latin root *hospes*, meaning “guest” or “host.” Based on this root, which definition of *hospitable* BEST fits how it is used in the sentence?

- A) welcoming and generous to others
- B) skilled enough to work without supervision
- C) formal and respectful of tradition
- D) well-known throughout the local area

Item 6 — RI.6.1 | Citing textual evidence | DOK 3 | MS

Select *TWO* pieces of evidence from the passage that BEST support the conclusion that craft recognition systems are a form of cultural preservation.

- A) “In Japan, the government formally acknowledges the custodians of endangered craft traditions through a program established in the mid-twentieth century.”
- B) “The program covers practitioners of arts ranging from silk weaving to lacquerwork to the forging of traditional blades.”
- C) “Recipients of the Ningen Kokuhō designation receive a government stipend that supports their work and recognizes their achievement.”

D) “In Fez, a master zellige tile-maker who receives recognition from the asnaf guild is understood to carry not just personal skill but a responsibility to the tradition itself.”

E) “The noren-wake ceremony does more than mark a transition between individuals; it is a formal act of cultural transmission, ensuring that a body of technique survives into the next generation.”

Item 7 — RI.6.2 | Text structure and development | DOK 3 | MC

How does the author develop the central idea across the passage?

A) by describing a single craft community in detail and then arguing that other communities should adopt its practices

B) by comparing the benefits of formal recognition systems against the drawbacks of informal apprenticeship

C) by explaining the history of apprenticeship and formal recognition across several decades

D) by presenting examples from different cultures and identifying what those examples have in common

PASSAGE 2

The Line—1000L | Literary

(1) The striper, a long, thin brush whose fine hairs held barely a whisper of paint, had been sitting in its jar of mineral spirits for three days before Sofia finally picked it up. Her uncle, Tío Beto, had set it on the worktable without a word, which was his way of telling her she was ready to try something she had not yet learned to do.

(2) The lowrider bike frames along the shop walls had always seemed to Sofia like objects from a slightly different world. Their candy-painted surfaces caught light in ways that made them look almost liquid, and their chrome fixtures were polished to a mirror finish that reflected everything back in curved, compressed forms. Pinstriping was the final stage of that transformation. It was the moment when a painter stopped applying color and started applying intention.

(3) She loaded the brush with one-shot enamel and drew it carefully across the fender. The line wobbled at the midpoint and spread at the end into a thin feather of excess paint her Tío called a whisker. “Too much pressure,” he said, without turning to face her. “The line should come out of the brush like a song; it should not be forced.” Sofia looked at the whisker. It was small, barely the width of a thread, but it was impossible to miss.

(4) She wiped the fender clean and tried again. The second line broke midway, the paint too dry to hold through the curve. She understood, in a way she couldn’t yet name, that the brush required something from her that wasn’t strength or speed: a kind of sustained attention, a focused presence that had to travel all the way from her wrist to the bristles to the surface below.

(5) She worked through the afternoon. Tío Beto brought her water once and moved the lamp once. Otherwise, he left her alone with the brush and the growing record of her failed attempts. By the time he turned on the overhead lights, she had produced eleven whiskers, four breaks, and one line that curved in a direction she couldn’t explain.

(6) The twelfth line was different. She felt it before she saw it: a responsiveness in the brush that ran between her wrist and the enamel like a current finding its channel. The line that came out was taut; it had a precision and a purposefulness that none of her previous attempts had managed, and when she lifted the brush at the end of the curve, the tip released cleanly without a whisker or a break.

(7) “That one,” Tío Beto said from across the shop.

(8) She studied the line. It was maybe four inches long, tracing a curve that had no function beyond decoration: it simply marked the boundary between two colors, but within the hour a layer of clear enamel would seal it permanently beneath the surface. She understood, for the first time, that its lack of functionality didn't make it lesser.

(9) Three months later, when she had finished the full pinstripe pattern on her first commissioned frame, Tío Beto handed her a small brush and pointed to the inside of the left chainguard. "Your maker's mark goes there," he said. "Every piece should carry one. It tells whoever sees this frame, ten years from now or thirty, whose hands did the work."

(10) Sofia held the brush above the space and considered. She thought of the line she had drawn on the fender, now sealed beneath its layers of clear coat; she thought of Tío Beto's own marks, which she had found on frames in three different cities. She had crossed a threshold: not the entry to the shop, but the beginning of something she was now responsible for carrying forward.

ITEMS — PASSAGE 2

Item 8 — RL.6.3 | Character development | DOK 2 | MC

How does Sofia change from the beginning to the end of the story?

- A) She loses confidence in her abilities after making multiple errors.
- B) She learns that the value of craft lies in the finished product rather than in the process of making it.
- C) She moves from attempting a skill she cannot yet perform to earning her place in a tradition she is now responsible for continuing.
- D) She shifts from admiring her uncle's work from a distance to asking him directly for instruction.

Item 9 — RL.6.2 | Theme | DOK 3 | MC

Which statement BEST expresses a theme of the passage?

- A) Mastery requires a teacher who provides constant guidance and correction.
- B) Learning a craft means appreciating more than its practical value.

- C) The most meaningful achievements are those that others can see and acknowledge.
- D) True skill is developed mainly through formal training in a structured environment.

Item 10 — L.6.4a | Context clues | DOK 2 | MC

Read this sentence from paragraph 1.

The striper, a long, thin brush whose fine hairs held barely a whisper of paint, had been sitting in its jar of mineral spirits for three days before Sofia finally picked it up.

Which phrase from the sentence BEST helps the reader understand the meaning of *striper*?

- A) “a long, thin brush”
- B) “whisper of paint”
- C) “sitting in its jar”
- D) “of mineral spirits”

Item 11 — RL.6.4 | Figurative language | DOK 2 | MC

Read this sentence from paragraph 3.

The line should come out of the brush like a song; it should not be forced.

What does this simile suggest about how Sofia should approach pinstriping?

- A) The movement should feel natural and easy.
- B) The process should be artistic and produce music.
- C) Pinstriping requires repetition to memorize the correct motion.
- D) Painting is easier if done to a steady beat.

Item 12 — RL.6.4 | Vocabulary and connotation | DOK 2 | MC

Read this excerpt from paragraph 4.

...the brush required something from her that wasn't strength or speed: a kind of sustained attention, a focused presence that had to travel all the way from her wrist to the bristles to the surface below.

What is the meaning of *sustained* in this excerpt?

- A) hurried
- B) polite
- C) spotless
- D) unbroken

Item 13 — L.6.1a | Pronoun reference | DOK 1 | MC

Read this sentence from paragraph 9.

Every piece should carry one. It tells whoever sees this frame, ten years from now or thirty, whose hands did the work.

What does the word *It* refer to in this sentence?

- A) the frame
- B) Tío Beto
- C) the maker's mark
- D) the work

Item 14 — L.6.5 | Figurative language and symbolism | DOK 3 | MC

Read this sentence from paragraph 9.

“Your maker’s mark goes there,” he said.

What is a *maker’s mark* in the context of the story?

- A) proof that Sofia has fulfilled all of her uncle’s training requirements
- B) a permanent connection between Sofia and the craft she has made
- C) a record of ownership that protects the frame from being claimed by others
- D) a decorative element that increases the commercial value of the finished frame

Item 15 — L.6.4d | Dictionary use | DOK 2 | MC

Read this sentence from paragraph 10.

She had crossed a threshold: not the entry to the shop, but the beginning of something she was now responsible for carrying forward.

Read the dictionary entry below.

threshold (noun)

1. a strip of wood or metal at the bottom of a doorway
2. the level or point at which something begins or changes
3. the minimum level of stimulus required to produce a response
4. a gate or door between two spaces

Which definition BEST confirms the student’s understanding of *threshold* as it is used in the passage?

- A) definition 1
- B) definition 2
- C) definition 3
- D) definition 4

Item 16 — RL.6.1 | Citing textual evidence | DOK 2 | MC

Which detail from the passage MOST CLEARLY shows that Sofia’s mistakes are a necessary part of her learning process?

- A) “Her uncle, Tío Beto, had set it on the worktable without a word, which was his way of telling her she was ready to try something she had not yet learned to do.”
- B) “Tío Beto brought her water once and moved the lamp once. Otherwise, he left her alone with the brush and the growing record of her failed attempts.”
- C) “By the time he turned on the overhead lights, she had produced eleven whiskers, four breaks, and one line that curved in a direction she couldn’t explain.”
- D) “She felt it before she saw it: a responsiveness in the brush that ran between her wrist and the enamel like a current finding its channel.”

Item 17 — RL.6.3 | Character relationships | DOK 2 | MC

How does Tío Beto’s behavior throughout the story contribute to Sofia’s development as a craftsperson?

- A) By correcting her methods frequently, he ensures she does not repeat the same mistakes.

- B) By demonstrating the method himself, he gives her a model to follow and imitate.
- C) By leaving her to work independently, he requires her to develop focus and skill on her own.
- D) By offering encouragement after each failed attempt, he helps her maintain interest in her work.

CROSS-PASSAGE ITEMS

Item 18 — RL.6.9 | Comparing across genres | DOK 3 | MC

Which statement correctly compares how the two passages explore the idea of recognition of craft mastery?

- A) The informational passage argues that formal recognition is unnecessary, while the literary passage shows a character earning the recognition of others.
- B) Both passages suggest that mastery is defined primarily by the products a craftsperson creates rather than by the process of making them.
- C) Both passages focus on mastering ancient traditions that are in danger of being replaced by modern methods.
- D) The informational passage defines mastery through shared systems and standards, while the literary passage shows mastery developing through one person's experience.

Item 19 — RL.6.9 | Comparing across genres | DOK 3 | MS

Select *TWO* statements that correctly identify a similarity between the passages.

- A) Both passages suggest that true mastery involves a responsibility to pass knowledge on to others.
- B) Both passages argue that government-sponsored recognition programs are more effective than community-based ones.
- C) Both passages show that a personal mark or symbolic gesture connects an individual craftsperson to a tradition larger than themselves.
- D) Both passages suggest that learning a craft at a high level requires working alone.

E) Both passages suggest that a craftsperson must experience repeated failure before they can receive formal recognition from their community.

FILL-IN-THE-BLANK ITEMS

Directions: Listen carefully as your teacher reads each word aloud, uses it in a sentence, and repeats it. Write the correctly spelled word on the blank line provided.

Administrator script: For each item, read the word aloud, read the sentence, then repeat the word. Students write the word they hear. In digital administration, the platform delivers audio automatically.

Item 20 — L.6.2 | Spelling | DOK 1 | FITB

Word: hospitality

Sentence: “He was known throughout the area for his hospitality—apprentices traveled from nearby villages to learn in his workshop.”

Repeat: hospitality

Write the spelling word you heard: _____

Item 21 — L.6.2 | Spelling | DOK 1 | FITB

Word: skepticism

Sentence: “Sofia approached painting the stripe with skepticism, certain that a line so fine could not be controlled by someone who had never tried.”

Repeat: skepticism

Item 22 — L.6.2 | Spelling | DOK 1 | FITB

Word: descent

Sentence: “Tío Beto traced the descent of his pinstriping style back to a painter he had apprenticed under as a teenager.”

Repeat: descent

Item 23 — L.6.2 | Spelling | DOK 1 | FITB

Word: solemn

Sentence: “The ceremony was a solemn occasion—no one in the room made a sound.”

Repeat: solemn
