

Nipher Middle School
Sixth Grade Course Descriptions
2023-2024

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 6

Sixth Grade English Language Arts encourages students to reflect on the power of the individual. Students will look inward as they reflect on their own lives, writing about powerful narrative moments that have helped shape the person they are today. Through literature and nonfiction, students will also consider the impact individuals have on the world around them. By reading and analyzing a variety of texts in whole class and book club settings, students will discover how to question and make sense of the world. Students will use their voice to form ideas and opinions while learning how to effectively use evidence and reasoning to validate their thoughts through the writing of claim, evidence and reasoning paragraphs. By the end of the year, students will develop their narrative voices in their own writing and be able to analyze and discuss the impact of other writers' narratives in fiction and nonfiction texts.

MATHEMATICS 6

Sixth grade math is a yearlong journey where students will explore and learn how to compute with variations of rational numbers including decimals and fractions as well as working with ratios, rates, proportions, algebraic equations, the coordinate plane, geometry, and statistics. Throughout, students will build their number sense and ability to reason.

SCIENCE 6

Students in 6th grade focus on physical science. We introduce the student to physics and chemistry. The emphasis is on discovery and activity-based learning through units such as matter, energy, force & motion, and properties of waves. Students complete a project that focuses on essential ideas each quarter.

SOCIAL STUDIES 6

Students enrolled in 6th grade social studies will study World Geography, Culture and Citizenship. Our goal is to help students develop mental models of what the world looks like physically and culturally and with a beginning understanding of how people connect with their various forms of governments around the world. Students will practice the historical thinking skills of perspective taking, comparison and contrast and change over time. They will craft arguments using the claim, evidence reasoning structure to back their positions and findings about the places, cultures, peoples and governments around the world. Students will connect/compare/contrast their learning from around the world to Kirkwood/St. Louis, Missouri. Utilizing the framework of Change Makers students will evaluate the impact individuals have on their communities, countries, regions and the world.

WELLNESS

Wellness is a three-year comprehensive program in which students will participate in each grade level year they are at Nipher. Students will focus on healthful living practices, strong self-esteem and personal awareness, and building and maintaining a strong, healthy body through both class work and active participation in conditioning classes.

FULL YEAR ELECTIVES

BAND

6th Grade Band members must successfully complete 1 year of instrumental music study or meet director approval based on musical aptitude prior to enrollment. The disciplines involved in the study of music demand mastery levels of intellect, memory, concentration, and emotion as well as the coordination of sensory awareness. The development of fundamentally sound habits is key to the success of a 6th grade band member. Students will explore traditional and contemporary works of music in a variety of styles and will perform two required concerts.

CHOIR

In 6th Grade Choir, students will start to develop singing skills and techniques that will be reinforced and built upon in 7th and 8th Grade. Vocal fundamentals such as posture, breathing and sight-singing using solfege will be a focus as will the development of vocal range and performance skills.

ORCHESTRA (min. 1-year experience)

Instruction in Orchestra is offered in Violin, Viola, Cello, and Bass. Students choosing to participate in the advanced 6th- grade orchestra must have at least 1 year of prior experience with the completion of Essential Elements Book 1 or equivalent. Students will work on orchestral pieces two performances for 6th-8th grade, Festival of Strings at Kirkwood High School and Large Group Festival. Emphasis will be placed on good technique, left and right-hand posture, vibrato, an introduction to shifting and ensemble playing.

SOAR

This course is offered to students who meet district criteria for the state gifted program. Students will complete activities and projects involving creativity, critical thinking, research, presentation skills, and problem solving. Once in the middle school program, students need not requalify each year.

EXPLORATORY COURSE ROTATIONS

ART

Students in the sixth grade Art program will begin to explore the art elements and principles of design in light of art history and studio activities. Studio activities will include both two-dimensional and three-dimensional formats and will introduce students to various media. Students will begin to establish artistic practices such as keeping a sketchbook and building a digital portfolio of their artwork.

ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY

This class will expose students to Technology used today by Engineers and other Technologists. Classroom discussions and readings will examine the impact of technology and engineering on the economy, society, and environment. Students will understand the purpose and importance of working as a team and applying a design process to solve problems through various forms of communication. Students will accurately use design and drafting equipment to complete drawings.

INTRO TO JOURNALISM

In this class, students will learn how to recognize and create journalistic media. Students are introduced to the concepts of news journalism, newspaper design, interviewing basics, and video broadcast styles in a highly interactive classroom format.

MUSIC

In 6th Grade Music, music fundamentals (pitch, rhythm, etc.) are reinforced and expanded upon through the art of music composition. The students will do this by utilizing technology such as Finale Notepad and Garage Band on computers as well as on their iPads. Students will have the opportunity to perform one or more of their compositions in class. This course also offers the 6th graders an introduction to singing experiences at Nipher as we discuss the fundamentals of singing and perform together in class.

SPEECH/DRAMA

This is a beginning course designed to introduce young actors and speakers to the art of performance. Students will explore various theatrical genres and will learn basic acting techniques through small performances, group and partner exercises, and theatrical games and activities. A supportive and encouraging environment is cultivated as students learn the importance of ensemble. Their newfound confidence will lead to improved performances and presentations in all their classes because of the skills learned.

WOODWORKING

This class will explore what it takes to develop a wood project safely using woodworking equipment. We will learn to design a project and develop an understanding of drawings that are used to guide us in the construction of a project. We will use the tools of technologist like math, measurement skills and drawings techniques. After thorough instruction in general safety procedures and safe usage of machines, students will use various tools and machines to incorporate manufacturing processes to construct projects.

WORLD LANGUAGES

The goal of World Language instruction for sixth graders is to help students discover languages and the cultures where they are spoken. Students explore basic language functions, such as introductions, greeting, and counting. They also learn about basic cultural differences and similarities. Students begin to acquire listening and speaking skills.