



SIXTH GRADE COURSE OUTLINES AND REQUIREMENTS

Language Arts – Reading:

Text: *Triumphs* California Reading Series
Houghton Mifflin

Students are expected to read six books a trimester at their reading level; three of which are in a specific literary genre. Students must chart their reading progress on a reading log. Your child has the entire book genre and report dates on a bright yellow sheet in the reading section of his/her notebook. In order for students to maintain this reading pace, they are to read twenty to thirty minutes each evening Monday through Thursday as part of homework. Weekends can be used for catch-up.

Book reports are assigned following the schedule in your child's notebook. The total book report grade is one-third the first reading log, one-third the second log, and one-third the post-it notes used for vocabulary development. Reading guidelines are on a bright yellow sheet in your child's notebook as well as on my page on the internet.

Students are to have their reading books in class every day.

Ideas to help your child with reading:

- Make your house a house of books. Parents must read to set an example.
- Watch less television and read instead. Have your child use a T.V. program guide to plan the television shows he/she would like to watch. This cuts down on time spent watching T.V.
- Ask your child to tell you what he/she has read.
- Read to your child. Have family reading nights.
- Have your child subscribe to a favorite magazine.

Language Arts – Writing:

Writing process papers are evaluated on a rubric for specific skill(s) taught in language lessons. Writing is kept in each student's writing portfolio. All grammar, punctuation, and usage rules are expected to be applied once they have been taught. Students will be asked to "highlight" certain skills to prove they have mastered and applied the skill. Refer to the Sixth Grade State of California Standards for the specific grammar skills for sixth grade.

Revisions will be emphasized with students encouraged to begin to develop a writing style. Sentence arrangement and elements of figurative language will be taught, discussed, and applied by students.

To help students with their writing fluency, they will write three times a week in a writing journal. Journal topics may be used as a "springboard" for writing process papers as well as for the application of grammar, techniques, and mechanics.

Ideas to help your child with writing:

- Encourage students to revise sentences.

- Give him/her opportunities to write at home. Examples include shopping lists, letters to friends and relatives, thank you cards, diaries, invitations, and greeting cards.

Language Arts – Spelling:

Text: Irvine Unified School District Program

The goal of learning to spell is to communicate effectively in writing. Students will spend approximately 15 minutes each day on directed spelling instruction and practice in class. Students will have additional spelling homework. Spelling is graded from student's everyday writing. Students must follow the criteria below or their spelling grade is lowered.

- NEVER misspell a word on the Priority List (bright yellow in the spelling section of your child's notebook) in any writing.
- Any word written on the board or on a worksheet must be spelled correctly when copied from the board or paper.
- Any paper that goes through the writing process with rough-drafts and a final copy must be a perfectly spelled, error-free paper.

In addition, students must demonstrate effort to visualize and learn the new words introduced each week as well as correctly completing the weekly word practice using a dictionary.

Ideas to help your child in spelling:

- Encourage dictionary/spell check usage.
- Correct all spelling errors in everyday writing.

Mathematics:

Text: *Mathematics Course I Numbers to Algebra*
Holt, Rinehart, Winston

The mathematics program at Eastshore balances computation skills with mathematical thinking. Homework will be assigned most nights Monday through Thursday. Since homework is practice, it is graded on completion. A student will correct errors on homework assignments below seventy percent. Each unit will have one or more quizzes and a unit test/assessment.

The mathematics report card grade is as follows: One-third tests, one-third quizzes, and one-third homework. As stated above, the homework grade is on completion. If the student completes all homework, he/she has 100%, one assignment missed is a 75%, two assignments missed is a 50%, three assignments is a 25%, and four assignments missed is a zero. Most students will struggle with the tests; therefore, a 100% homework grade will off set a low test average.

By sixth grade, students should know basic multiplication and division facts as well as the basic operations involving whole numbers, fractions, and decimals. We will practice these skills using a skills practice program called *Tuning Up Computationally* in my math class.

Our mathematics textbook is on line so you'll have access to your child's math book even when he/she forgets it at school. Click on the link on my web page on the Eastshore web site

Ideas to help your child with math:

- Don't say, "Math is hard", or "I was a lousy math student".
- Encourage him/her to estimate when he/she makes a purchase.

- Encourage him/her to know the amount of change he/she should receive when making a purchase.
- Have him/her develop a budget with his/her allowance money. Open a savings account. Practice rolling and counting coin as well as counting currency.

Social Studies:

Text: *World History Ancient Civilizations*
McDougal Littell

Sixth grade curriculum is ancient civilizations. My goal is to help students make the connection between ancient times and our current world. Students will study religion – the extinct religions of ancient Rome, Greece, and Egypt as well as the extant religions of Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, and Hinduism. Islam will be studied next year as it does not have its start in ancient times. The working definition that students use for what constitutes a religion is that a religion must have a leap of faith. A leap of faith cannot be proved or disproved. Without a leap of faith, there is no religion.

Ideas to help your child with social studies:

- Watch and discuss documentary programs together.
- Do not watch television news – it's the most violent of all television programming.
- Purchase a newspaper subscription and read it.
- Discuss current issues at the dinner table. Encourage your child's own ideas.
- Help your child use a map whenever you are traveling.

Fine Arts:

District Art Program/District Music Program

Music and art are integrated throughout the curriculum in this class. Students will participate in visual art classes taught by one of Irvine's art specialists.

Ideas to help your child with fine arts:

- Take your children to live musical and theatrical performances
- Teach them appropriate behavior for these performances. Discuss the differences between live performances and movies/sporting events.

Physical Education:

Students have physical education three days a week. They need to wear or bring tennis shoes and a light colored tee shirt on physical education days. Students should not wear black. They all need to wear deodorant and change clothes daily – especially underwear and socks.

Some students are in poor physical condition. All students need to work on upper body exercises like push-ups and sit-ups and/or aerobic exercise such as running as part of their daily homework. This homework should become routine, so it will not be written in a student's planner. A student's physical condition affects both health and their ability to study and retain information.

Students are to do push-ups and sit-ups every night as part of fitness homework. Students have discovered their base amount for both sit-ups and push-ups which gives them how many they should do. They should increase this amount at least monthly. I've suggested that they attach their exercise period to something they do daily such as before going to bed, before a meal, when they awake in the morning, or before/after showering

so that exercise becomes part of their daily routine. Students are also required to do something aerobic each day which can include going to a youth team sports practice, skateboarding, riding a bike, etc. A student who spends his/her afterschool time watching television or in front of a computer is not healthy.

Health is taught using *The Great Body Shop* program published by The Children's Health Market.

Ideas to help your child with physical education:

- Teach your child to prepare nutritious meals and snacks.
- Exercise with you child.
- If he/she is in poor physical condition, see that he/she works exercise into his/her daily routine.
- Encourage your children to be physically active after school as they have been sitting for most of the day.
- Encourage him/her to use his/her bicycle for transportation. **DO NOT DRIVE THEM.**
- Turn off television, video games, computer during daylight hours.
- Purchase deodorant for them.

Outdoor Education:

Catalina Island Marine Institute, Catalina Island
March 15-19, 2010

Science:

District Program

Text: *Focus on Earth Science* Glenco

I as well as Mr. Kaufman teach Science. I will be teaching units on the Dynamic Earth which focuses on the forces on the Earth that cause change. Students will learn how weathering of rock and soil and reshapes the Earth's topography by the transportation and deposition of sediment. They will learn about the energy, material, and time to shape and reshape the Earth's land surface. Our last unit in science will be on the ocean which will coincide with our field trip to the Catalina Island Marine Institute. During our ocean unit, students will learn how ocean organisms in ecosystems exchange energy and nutrients among themselves and with both terrestrial and ocean environments.

Mr. Kaufman is beginning with science fair. All sixth grade students are expected to complete a science fair project. This is our only long-term at-home research project for the year. You should find a science fair timeline in your child's science folder. Many students struggle in finding a science fair project idea. A good criterion to use for your child's question is that if the results of the experiment cannot be easily measured, then it is not a good idea. Product comparison or consumer testing is not a valid science fair project; therefore, a question such as which laundry detergent removes grease the best or which mouthwash kills the most germs will not be accepted.

Science Fair teaches students the process of science. All science process skills must be evident in a science fair project – observation, measurement, prediction, identifying variables, hypotheses, and interpreting results.

Not all lessons of each chapter in the text will be covered. If we've skipped a lesson, students will not be tested on the material from that lesson.

Graded Assignments and Organization:

Graded work and notices will be sent home on Thursday. Each student should use the front pocket of his/her notebook to transport papers to/from school. Students should not have loose papers in their desks, backpacks or tucked in text books.

Papers that require a signature or fee have two school days to be returned. Students are penalized for failure to return signature papers within two days. If a fee is required and you need more than two days then a note will allow your child to have extended time. This requirement helps me teach my students responsibility skills.

All students are required to carry a three-ring binder with dividers for Math, Reading, Spelling/Writing, Social Studies, and Science/Health. Students may use seven dividers in order to have a section for each class.

Students should have all homework papers filed in the correct sections of their notebook as they complete homework at home. In addition, planners all books, school supplies, and notebooks should be returned to the backpack before the completion of homework.

Additional information on organizational requirements can be found on the Sixth Grade Procedures page on the reverse side of Classroom Behavior Standards. This is a bright yellow sheet of paper and is located in the front of your child's three-ring notebook, and there is a copy posted on my web page.

Report Cards:

Report Cards will electronically be sent home which means that students will not receive a paper copy of a report card. You must have your parent portal open in order to receive a report card.

Information and Communication:

All information is on my web page at <http://www.iusd.org/ea/staff/brooks.htm>. Most weeks I will electronically send home a weekly update through your parent portal. If you have not opened your parent portal, you will not receive these updates.

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