



2026-2027

SIXTH GRADE CURRICULUM GUIDE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Sixth grade English Language Arts provides students with a structured literacy experience aligned to the Common Core State Standards and grounded in evidence-based literacy practices. Instruction supports the development of strong reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language skills through explicit teaching, guided practice, and meaningful application.

Students read and analyze a variety of complex literary and informational texts while building background knowledge, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and critical thinking skills. Writing instruction emphasizes evidence-based responses, argumentation, research, organization, and writing for different purposes and audiences. Students also strengthen academic vocabulary, grammar, discussion skills, and media literacy as they learn to communicate clearly and effectively.

MATHEMATICS

Sixth grade students engage in a rigorous Math curriculum using the *Carnegie Learning* program, which emphasizes real-world problem-solving, conceptual understanding, and collaborative learning. The core 6th grade course covers key concepts such as ratios and proportional relationships, number system fluency with fractions and decimals, expressions and equations, statistical thinking, and an introduction to geometry.

Students enrolled in Accelerated Math follow the *Carnegie Learning Accelerated Grade 6* curriculum, which blends both 6th and 7th grade standards. This includes all core sixth grade topics as well as more advanced concepts such as integer operations, equations and inequalities, proportional reasoning, and probability.

SOCIAL SCIENCE

Social Science instruction introduces sixth grade students to the foundations of history, civics, geography, and economics through an inquiry-based approach aligned to the Illinois Social Science Learning Standards. Students explore early civilizations, including Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, China, Greece, and Rome, while examining how geography, culture, government, economics, and innovation influenced the development of societies.

Through the Social Science Inquiry Process, students learn to ask questions, analyze primary and secondary sources, evaluate evidence, and draw conclusions. Students also build foundational knowledge in civic responsibility, geographic reasoning, and financial literacy. This course helps students strengthen critical thinking, communication, and reasoning skills while making meaningful connections between ancient civilizations and the world we live in today.

SCIENCE

In sixth grade, students begin developing their scientific thinking through units that include cells and heredity, energy and energy transfer, Earth's water and atmosphere, weather, and engineering design. Students explore basic cell structures and genetics, investigate how energy is used and transferred, examine Earth's water systems and weather patterns, and learn how scientists and engineers ask questions, solve problems, and design solutions. The course emphasizes curiosity, critical thinking, evidence-based reasoning, collaboration, and real-world connections.

Science instruction is aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards and provides students with opportunities to think, investigate, and problem-solve like scientists. Instruction incorporates science and engineering practices, cross-cutting concepts, and core science ideas to help students build a deeper understanding of the natural world. Through a blend of hands-on investigations, technology, collaboration, discussion, and scientific inquiry, students explore important concepts across life, earth, physical, and engineering sciences.

ENCORE CLASSES

ACOUSTICS

This introductory course provides a comprehensive foundation in acoustic guitar performance, focusing on the development of essential musical and technical skills. Students will learn to master proper technique, read standard notation and rhythms, and perform basic melodies in the first position. The curriculum also incorporates the study of fundamental chords and iconic guitar riffs. Through immersive hands-on practice, students build musicianship and self-confidence while gaining a deeper understanding of how technical proficiency translates to musical performance.

ART

Sixth grade Art introduces students to the basic elements of art, including line, shape, color, value, texture, form, and space. Students apply these concepts through a variety of two-dimensional and three-dimensional projects, including drawing, painting, and 3D design. Through imagination, observation, and creative exploration, students create both representational and non-representational artwork. The curriculum also incorporates connections to art history and culture, helping students build artistic skills, creativity, and appreciation for the visual arts.

BAND

Sixth grade Band helps students develop foundational instrumental skills through the study of rhythm, scales, percussion rudiments, and key musical concepts. Students participate in weekly lessons, regular practice, and performances both in and out of school. Through rehearsal and performance, students build musicianship, responsibility, confidence, and teamwork while continuing to grow as instrumental musicians.

CHOIR

Sixth grade Choir provides students with the opportunity to develop their vocal skills while performing music from a variety of genres, including classical, folk, holiday, jazz, rock, musical theater, and pop. Students sing two- and three-part music with an emphasis on healthy vocal tone, musicianship, music reading, sight-reading, and vocal independence. Through rehearsal and performance, students build confidence, teamwork, and a deeper appreciation for choral music.

EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY: DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP AND APPLICATIONS

Educational Technology helps students develop the digital skills needed to use technology safely, responsibly, and effectively. Students expand their understanding of digital citizenship by learning how to protect themselves and others, make thoughtful choices online, and use technology appropriately. Students will practice keyboarding, explore basic computer applications, and use a variety of technology tools to demonstrate their learning. This course supports the development of 21st-century skills and is aligned to the International Society for Technology in Education standards.

GRAPHIC ARTS: ADOBE ILLUSTRATOR

Sixth grade students will learn and apply The Elements of Art through the use of Adobe Illustrator. Through the completion of a series of skill-based tutorials customized by Adobe, students will become efficient in their use of the program and develop an understanding of the fundamentals of art. Projects will demonstrate students' understanding of The Elements of Art and Adobe Illustrator, as students incorporate these skills into their own creative designs. Students will gain an understanding of the latest innovative designing technologies and will have the opportunity to work in virtual reality and create drawings in virtual space.

HEALTH

Sixth grade Health provides students with the knowledge and skills needed to make informed decisions and establish healthy habits. Students explore how physical, mental/emotional, and social health are interconnected through the Health Triangle and learn how daily choices affect overall well-being. Key topics include decision making, making healthy choices, conflict resolution, body systems, puberty, and personal hygiene. Students also participate in instruction related to Erin's Law and Ann Marie's Law, which focus on personal safety, abuse prevention, and identifying trusted adults for support. Through discussion, reflection, and practical application, students build the understanding and confidence necessary to care for themselves and maintain healthy relationships.

ORCHESTRA

Building on students' previous knowledge and playing experience, 6th grade Orchestra offers a more detailed study of rhythms, scales, string techniques and musical concepts will be applied in this course through student participation in weekly lessons, projects and the completion of both practice and practice charts in and out of school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Sixth grade Physical Education builds a foundation for lifelong fitness and wellness by helping students develop movement skills, physical fitness, and personal responsibility. Through individual and team activities, students improve coordination, strength, endurance,

and flexibility while learning the importance of regular physical activity. Instruction emphasizes teamwork, sportsmanship, conflict resolution, goal setting, and skill development through a variety of sports and games. Students are introduced to the FITT Principle and use it to understand fitness components and set personal goals. Through active participation, students build confidence, cooperation, and healthy habits that support an active lifestyle.

PROJECT LEAD THE WAY: DESIGN AND MODELING

Design and Modeling is a hands-on STEM course that introduces students to the engineering design process. Students use creativity, innovation, and problem-solving skills to develop solutions to real-world challenges while learning the basics of engineering and teamwork. Through sketches, design software, and physical models, students bring their ideas to life and refine their designs. They also build a portfolio to showcase their work, demonstrating their ability to think critically, collaborate, and create innovative solutions.

PROJECT LEAD THE WAY: MAGIC OF ELECTRONS

Magic of Electrons is a hands-on STEM course that introduces students to the principles of electricity and electrical engineering. Through interactive activities and problem-solving challenges, students explore key concepts such as conduction, current, voltage, magnetism, and circuitry. Students apply their learning by designing, building, and testing electrical systems while developing critical thinking, collaboration, and engineering skills. This course encourages curiosity and helps students understand how electricity and electronics impact the world around them.

SPANISH

Sixth grade Spanish introduces students to basic vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar while building foundational communication skills. Students learn to understand and use common classroom commands, greetings, and everyday expressions. Throughout the course, students explore topics such as numbers, colors, foods and drinks, classroom objects, rooms in a house, family members, jobs, animals, body parts, clothing, the alphabet, days of the week, months, weather, seasons, time, free-time activities, shopping, and travel. Students also learn to describe themselves and others using physical and personality traits. By the end of the course, students will be able to participate in basic conversations in Spanish.

WORLD MUSIC

World Music introduces students to music and dance traditions from cultures around the world. Through the study of European, African, and Central/South American countries, students explore how music reflects culture, history, and community. Students participate in hands-on activities such as playing penny whistles and drums, creating pan flutes, learning traditional dances, and researching different cultures. This course encourages creativity, cultural awareness, and appreciation for diverse musical traditions.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) is an important part of supporting students' academic, social, and personal growth. Through SEL, students develop the skills needed to understand and manage emotions, set and work toward personal and academic goals, build positive relationships, make responsible decisions, and demonstrate behaviors that support success in school and life.

Using Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) as a framework, sixth grade students participate in lessons and school-wide practices that support self-regulation, trust-building, healthy relationships, and behavioral and social competence. Students learn strategies to better understand themselves and others, respond to challenges in positive ways, and contribute to a safe, supportive, and connected school community.