



Sixth Grade Newsletter

6th Grade Language Arts

As part of our English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum, we will soon begin a unit titled *Finding Courage*. In this unit, students will read and consider works about people who develop the courage to face their own fears. We will examine several ways that fear affects us, as well as how people overcome a variety of fears. The texts we will read center on the Essential Question “How do you find courage in the face of fear?” This open-ended question is intended to spark thoughtful discussion. You may wish to explore this question with your student at home as well.

Unit 3 includes the following texts.

- **from *The Breadwinner*:** In this novel excerpt, the survival of a family in Afghanistan depends upon the courage of Parvana, an 11-year-old girl. Students will analyze character and plot, as well as character and setting in historical fiction.
- **Life Doesn’t Frighten Me:** In this poem, renowned poet Maya Angelou lists a number of childhood fears, describing how the speaker finds the courage to face those fears. Students will learn about elements of lyric poetry, including repetition and refrain, and will develop skills for identifying and explaining a poem’s speaker.
- **Fears and Phobias:** In this informational text, the author examines the causes of fears and phobias and explains the differences, noting ways to overcome common phobias. Students will analyze the structure of the text and identify text features. Students will also learn how to cite evidence.
- **Wired for Fear:** This video from the website Goose Bumps! The Science of Fear presents an animated explanation of how our brains process reactions to fear. Students will learn how to analyze the visual and sound elements that creators use to convey information.
- **Embarrassed? Blame Your Brain:** This informational text examines the complex reasons that teenagers naturally develop a strong and sometimes overwhelming fear of embarrassment. Students will learn how informational texts organize facts and examples and how to determine meanings of words and phrases in texts.
- **The Ravine:** The characters in award-winning author Graham Salisbury’s short story face choices that test their friendships, honesty, and courage. Students will learn how to analyze character and make inferences about a story and its characters.

Writing Tasks

- The Unit Writing Task, **Write an Informative Essay**, asks students to synthesize their reading and support their ideas using relevant evidence.
- Throughout the unit, students will use writing strategies to compose short constructed responses.

- Daily warm-ups on grammar will help students to incorporate a variety of sentence types into their writing.

Reading Tasks

- Students will analyze the texts through annotation, multiple choice questions, discussion activities, and written responses to questions.

Vocabulary

- Students will engage academic and text-based vocabulary strategies to help them better understand the texts

Social Studies

6th grade social studies class are starting to study North America. Our current focus will be on political and physical features across the continent. We will also take a look at culture and human environment interactions across the continent.

Math

6th Grade Inclusion - We are currently working on Unit 4. Unit 4 focuses on dividing fractions. Please make sure your scholar is practicing at home on IXL to reinforce what we learn in class.

6th Grade Honors - We are currently working on Unit 1. Unit 1 focuses on finding the area of parallelograms, triangles and polygons. We then venture into learning what Surface Area is and how to find it. Please make sure your scholar is practicing at home on IXL to reinforce what we learn in class.

Science

Students have been learning about lab safety rules and class norms to start off the school year. We did an activity to practice scientific writing with CERs (claim, evidence, and reasoning). They were categorizing different foods as soups, salads, or sandwiches and had to provide evidence and an explanation for their claim. It led to some fun discussions! We are now preparing to start our first unit on light and matter. Students will be learning about the phenomenon of a one-way-mirror.

PE/Health -- We began the school year with team building games and activities. We are in the middle of completing the first round of the Fitnessgram testing. Team sports will be up next. In health, we are working on promoting personal safety.

