

SIXTH GRADE COURSE OF STUDY

Sixth grade instructional programs in Los Altos schools are committed to helping each child meet the academic and intellectual competencies expected at this grade level and become active, engaged learners in a classroom setting. The following summary of the instructional program provides an overview of the sixth grade year. The sixth grade program builds on skills and knowledge children have learned in preceding years. It encourages critical thinking, creativity, and respect for self and others. Expectations are modified or expanded to meet a child's needs and abilities.

Curriculum standards are what all grade-level students are expected to know and be able to do by the end of a school year. Key concepts and standards of sixth grade education are included. If you would like a complete description of sixth grade standards, they can be downloaded from the [California Department of Education](http://www.cde.ca.gov/bs/bsr/sr/sr606.asp) website.

If you have questions about curriculum, please contact your child's teacher.

MATHEMATICS

Adopted Programs McDougal Littell: Mathematics: Concepts & Skills – I
 McDougal Littell: Pre-Algebra

Number Sense Compares & orders positive & negative fractions, decimals & mixed numbers
 Interprets and uses ratios in different contexts
 Uses proportions and cross multiplication to solve problems.
 Calculates percentages
 Solves problems involving addition, subtraction, multiplication & division of positive fractions
 Explains the meaning of multiplication & division of positive fractions
 Solves addition, subtraction, multiplication, & division problems that use positive & negative integers
 Finds the least common multiple & the greatest common divisor of whole numbers

Algebra and Functions Writes and solves one-step linear equations in one variable
 Applies algebraic order of operations to evaluate expressions
 Uses the commutative, associative, and distributive properties to evaluate expressions
 Solves problems involving rates, average speed, distance & time
 Uses variables in expressions describing geometric quantities

Measurement & Geometry Understands the concept of a constant, such as π
 Knows the formulas for the circumference and area of a circle
 Knows common estimates of π & uses these values to calculate circumference & area of circles
 Identifies angles as vertical, adjacent, complementary or supplementary
 Uses properties of angles & sums of angles to solve problems involving an unknown angle
 Draws quadrilaterals & triangles

Statistics, Data & Probability Computes the range, mean, median and mode of data sets
 Understands how the inclusion or exclusion of outliers affects these computations
 Represents all possible outcomes for compound events in an organized way
 Represents probabilities as ratios, proportions, decimals & percentages

READING-LANGUAGE ARTS

Adopted Programs Prentice Hall Reading/Literature Program
 Saddlier Oxford Vocabulary Workshop

Reading
 Word Recognition: Reads aloud narrative & expository text fluently & accurately
 Vocabulary: Identifies & interprets figurative language
 Understands "shades of meaning" in related words

Comprehension: Describes & connects the essential ideas, arguments, and perspectives of a text
Makes reasonable assertions about a text through accurate, supporting citations

Writing

Organization: Creates multi-paragraph expository compositions
Uses a variety of organizational patterns, including comparison & contrast

Research: Uses organizational features of electronic texts to locate information

Applications: Effectively writes narratives, developing a plot, setting and presenting a point of view
Effectively writes expository compositions.
Effectively writes research reports & supports ideas with facts, details & explanations
Effectively writes responses to grade level appropriate literature
Effectively writes persuasive compositions stating a clear position and supporting evidence

Sentence Structure: Uses a variety of sentence structures and lengths

Grammar/Punctuation: Understands & applies grade appropriate conventions

Spelling: Spells grade level appropriate words correctly

Listening and Speaking

Comprehension: Identifies the tone, mood & emotion conveyed in oral communications

Delivery: Emphasizes salient points to assist the listener in following the main ideas and concepts
Uses effective verbal and nonverbal elements to sustain audience interest & attention

Applications: Delivers well-organized formal presentation employing traditional rhetorical strategies

SCIENCE

Adopted Programs Prentice Hall, [Focus on Earth](#)

Earth Science Understands foundations of geology & geophysics; including plate tectonics & earth structure, topography, & energy
Understands resource management & ecology
Formulates hypotheses

SOCIAL STUDIES

Adopted Programs [Macmillan/McGraw-Hill, Ancient Civilizations](#)
TCI, [History Alive, The Ancient World](#)

Gains knowledge and understanding of the early civilizations of the world, explaining government, economy, religion, philosophy, arts, culture, and science/technology.
Examines critical issues, pivotal events, and important people.
Describes social levels in each culture
Analyze the relationship of technology to social change
Relate geography to economic development
Compare and contrast major religions of early civilizations
Considers why civilizations develop, why they became dominant, and why they decline.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

All children participate in daily physical education aimed at developing sportsmanship, coordination, agility, strength, stamina, enjoyment of physical activity and participation in team and individual sports. All upper grade children have the opportunity to take part in the Los Altos Junior Olympics each spring. A P.E. specialist works with the children twice every week.

FINE and PERFORMING ARTS

All upper grade students receive instruction in the arts on a weekly basis. Sixth grade students participate in a year-long music offering from the following choices: Wind Instrument Ensemble, Brass Instrument Ensemble String Instrument Ensemble or Non-Instrumental. Students also participate in three fine arts offerings during the course of the year, each lasting one trimester. Students will take each of the following courses: visual arts, drama and digital design. In addition to the weekly Fine Arts Block, the District provides trained volunteers through an Art Docent program.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

For children who qualify, the District offers programs for English Language Learners, Gifted and Talented, Speech and Language Development, Special Education, Psychological Testing and Counseling, and Home Teaching.