

Required and Elective Course Guide

6th Grade
2010 – 2011



Wester Middle School
469-633-4800

All classes listed in this course guide are subject to change due to alterations in personnel or budget

Course Descriptions

6th Grade

Students identified as needing extra math and/or reading instruction and/or students who do not meet the recommended standard for the TAKS Reading and/or TAKS Math test(s) will be required to take an accelerated class for portions of the TAKS they did not master.

Required Courses

English (full year)

The sixth grade language arts program is designed to help students develop those skills which will enable them to speak, write, read, and listen more effectively. This literature-based program will emphasize written communication and grammar.

Pre-Advanced Placement English (Full Year)

Pre-AP English provides capable students with a foundation course designed to prepare them for the rigorous Advanced Placement program. Sophisticated research and writing processes will be introduced and applied extensively throughout the year. Students who elect to take this rigorous course should expect high standards and time demands as set by any higher level course.

A student who earns below a 70% in two consecutive six week grading periods will be placed on academic probation and a committee including the student, parent and teacher will convene to develop a plan for future success. If at the conclusion of the six weeks of probation the student again earns below a 70%, the committee will reconvene to determine if Pre-AP, Algebra I and/or Spanish I is the appropriate placement.

Reading (full year)

The sixth grade reading course is designed to give students practice in word identification, comprehension, and study skills. The use of novels, thematic units, and structured free reading, as well as writing, will be integral part of this course.

GT Language Arts (full year) *****Must qualify for GT*****

Students who are currently identified in the Frisco ISD Gifted and Talented program (Quest) will be guided through a challenging course that will expose them to a variety of literature genres and writing techniques. Students will be required to read and analyze both classic and contemporary novels, participate in thematic units, conduct in-depth research, complete individual and group projects, and write extensively throughout the year. Critical thinking skills will be emphasized to prepare students for future advanced classes.

Math (full year)

The sixth grade mathematics program is designed to meet the needs of each child. It consists of a study of the four basic operations with whole number, integers, non-negative rational numbers and decimals. The program includes percents, metric measurements, concepts of geometry and pre-algebra. A variety of teaching methods and hands on materials will be used.

Pre-Advanced Placement Math (full year)

Pre-AP Math 6 is designed to prepare students for rigorous advanced course work in the future. Students will move at a rapid, challenging pace and study math concepts usually reserved for higher-grade levels. Students should be prepared for an additional time requirement for this class, and be willing to work independently.

A student who earns below a 70% in two consecutive six week grading periods will be placed on academic probation and a committee including the student, parent and teacher will convene to develop a plan for future success. If at the conclusion of the six weeks of probation the student again earns below a 70%, the committee will reconvene to determine if Pre-AP, Algebra I and/or Spanish I is the appropriate placement

Science (full year)

Sixth grade science encompasses earth, life and physical sciences. Students discover concepts in scientific methods, physics, chemistry, biology, behavior, ecology, geology, and astronomy. Students utilize reading, research, and experiments as a part of the discovery methods in this science program. Textbooks, laboratory materials, videos, filmstrips, and the library are resource for this study.

Social Studies (full year)

Sixth grade social studies encompass geographical, political, technological and cultural aspects of the many different nations of the world. The world is explored through a variety of resources presently available such as texts, kits, maps, globes, films, tapes, and guest speakers.

Computer Literacy/Exploratory Spanish (full year)

Computer Literacy is designed to emphasize keyboarding skills, computer related terminology, and use of the computer as a tool while developing knowledge of word processing, spreadsheets, databases and graphics. Computer Literacy will alternate with Study Skills.

Exploratory Spanish will give students an introduction to the Spanish language and to the diverse cultures of Spanish speaking countries. This course is designed to get 6th graders interested in Spanish 1 for the 7th and 8th grade years.

Physical Education (full year)

The physical education program provides students with opportunities to develop skills and sportsmanship through a variety of team sport skills and lifetime wellness activities.

Accelerated Class

Descriptions

6th Grade

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Accelerated Reading (full year)

Accelerated Reading Instruction (ARI) is designed to accelerate students who have not been successful on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) or are new to the district or state. This course is a supplement to the regular sixth grade reading course. The class closely parallels the grade level reading classroom by adding additional lessons on the same objectives while using differentiated resources. There are no more than 10 students in each class. Students practice reading fluency weekly by reading from different genres on their grade level. We also address goal setting and testing strategies to help prepare for the TAKS test. The Achieve 3000 Program is a technology program that adds additional practice in expository reading comprehension.

Accelerated Math (full year)

Accelerated Math Instruction (AMI) is designed to accelerate students who have not been successful on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), who scored close to failing the TAKS test, or are new to the district or state. This course is a supplement to the regular sixth grade math course. As a result, the course will focus on enriching gaps in student knowledge, correcting misconceptions, offering support for the regular math classroom, and decreasing math anxiety. It will review basic mathematical skills through hands-on discovery and real world application. This course will also teach test taking strategies in preparation for the TAKS test.

Elective Descriptions

6th Grade

Students who do not meet the recommended standard for the TAKS Math and/or Reading test(s) will be required to take an accelerated class in place of their elective for portions of the TAKS they did not master.

Art 6 (full year)

Art 6 will emphasize drawing techniques and design principles while studying the elements of art and Art History. Students will also have the opportunity to work with clay, paper collage, tempera paint, watercolor, colored pencils, and other painting media.

Beginning Band (full year)

This course is designed to teach students the basic fundamentals of a band instrument (Brass, Woodwind and Percussion). The course covers selections and care of instruments, correct playing position, reading music, and awareness of rhythm and pitch. Students will be placed into appropriate band classes by the band director after an interview to see what instrument is appropriate for the student's physical skills. There is no prior study or prerequisite needed for participation in the band program. Students are expected to practice regularly and will perform three concerts throughout the year. (Instrument arrangements will be made upon instrument selection.)

Orchestra - Beginning (full year)

The orchestra program provides instruction in violin, viola, cello, and bass. This class is open to any student who would like to further their musical knowledge and begin instruction on a stringed instrument. Beginning students learn the fundamentals of playing a stringed instrument. Students will also learn the correct posture, positions, and intonation to be used. They will learn to read music, rhythms, note names, musical symbols and definitions. These classes meet daily and focus on

establishing and developing basic musical and performance skills. During the year, the string students will combine on two or more occasions to present concerts for the parents and public. Instrument arrangements will be made upon instrument selection. Advanced classes are also available for students who have completed at least a year of instruction and are ready to expand their orchestra knowledge. Students will be placed into the appropriate class based on ability level determined by the orchestra instructor.

Choir (full year)

This course is designed to focus on the fundamentals of choral singing. Students will learn about vocal health, basic music theory, sight-reading, concert and performance etiquette. A variety of musical styles will be used and students will perform at least four times during the school year. The choir will also sing in the Sandy Lake Amusement Park choir contest in the Spring.

Theatre 6 (full year)

Theatre 6 is designed to introduce the student to the many performing and technical aspects of theatre. Acting is introduced through individual and group exercises in improvisational and memorized performances. Basic theatrical knowledge, play reading, and playwriting are emphasized. The primary objective is to develop the student's creativity and self-expression.

*****COURSE OFFERINGS IN THE ELECTIVE AREAS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AND/OR OMISSION DUE TO AN INSUFFICIENT AMOUNT OF STUDENT REQUESTS, LACK OF QUALIFIED PERSONNEL TO TEACH THE CLASS, OR FUNDING. THE STUDENT WILL BE PLACED IN THE NEXT ELECTIVE CHOICE ON THE SCHEDULE CARD FILLED OUT BY THE STUDENT AND PARENT.**