

Jefferson Middle School
6th Grade – Curriculum Guide
2021-2022

Required Courses

6th Grade Core Academic Classes

English Language Arts: The 6th grade ELA curriculum combines reading both literature and informational text with writing, speaking and listening, and language. The Tennessee state standards emphasize the connection between reading and writing and focus on developing the student's ability to fully comprehend complex text including making connections, learning to cite evidence, and recognizing inconsistent or flawed reasoning. The reading/writing connection will be strengthened as students learn to apply critical reading skills when writing arguments, informative/explanatory essays, and narratives. Students will study the conventions of Standard English and vocabulary as a means of enhancing their comprehension of texts and ability to craft responses in both written and spoken forms.

Mathematics:

Mathematics: Students are placed into **regular or advanced** math classes based on their past performance, test scores, and teacher recommendation. Most students are placed in regular math. Depending on the class level, students study integers, decimals, fractions, measurement, geometry, percents, probability, ratio and proportion, equations, graphing and tables.

Advanced Math 7: Students proceed through 6th grade standards at an accelerated pace and will address 7th grade standards by the end of the year.

Science: The sixth-grade science curriculum explores a variety of topics including life science, Earth science and physical science. Throughout the year, hands-on activities and laboratory experiences are incorporated to enhance the understanding of topics presented.

Social Studies: The social studies curriculum consists of World History and the study of Geography. The major focus is an in-depth study of early civilizations through the decline of the Roman Empire (through 5th century C.E). Students gain a broader awareness of the world through studying the cultures of different nations.

6th Grade Rotational Classes

Physical Education: The physical education program is an instructional class that teaches students the fundamentals of team sports, the importance of regular physical fitness, and lifetime wellness activities. Emphasis is placed on activities that condition students in physical strength and endurance as well as the development of coordination and physical skills. Students are required to have a set of physical education clothes for participation. Required PE clothes consist of mid-thigh length shorts with an elastic band or drawstring, a solid white, solid gray, solid royal blue, solid yellow, OR any Jefferson Eagles t-shirt, athletic socks, and a pair of tennis shoes. Per JMS dress code, no spandex/compression leggings, pants, or capris are allowed to be worn in PE classes. Students also have the opportunity to have their own PE locker, which requires a combination lock. Students are required to participate and dress out in proper physical education clothes. **Students must have a written note from a physician to be excused from PE.**

Courses That Alternate with 6th grade P. E.

6th grade students rotate Art, Digital Citizenship, Engineering by Design, and Portrait of a Graduate throughout the school year, alternating days with Physical Education.

Art: This is a term course. Art focuses on improving observational skills. Students are challenged to complete several drawings of everyday objects in class and at home. The final project of the class is an extensive color piece utilizing watercolor paint to add dimension to a large tree study. Students draw the tree on location in the school's courtyard. If time warrants, student will also complete a three-dimensional clay piece.

Digital Citizenship: 6th grade classes will rotate through Digital Citizenship for one nine-week period. During this rotation the student will demonstrate mastery of the keyboard with an emphasis on speed as well as have an introduction to CAD and complete preliminary tasks using Inventor software.

Engineering by Design (Rockets): This is a term course. This course enables students to develop technology literacy skills. Students are informed about space and space technology. Each student will build a rocket from paper materials and launch it the last week of class.

Portrait of a Graduate (focused on Communication for Careers): This course is designed to assist students in practicing communication skills that are necessary to excel in future coursework and occupations. Students will learn about existing high school, college, and career pathways, and how to successfully transition into them. In Oak Ridge schools we are implementing Project-Based Learning (PBL) as an engaging instructional approach for learning 21st century career skills. Students will also learn the computer program Autodesk Revit. This program will be necessary for later use in some 7th and 8th grade courses. This course will emphasize academic learning goals and competencies that focus specifically on effective communication skills that are essential in life and careers.

Non-Required Courses

6th Grade Elective Courses

****Attention: Elective courses are ONLY available if a student is not in the RTI (Response to Intervention) program for Reading or Math. If a student is placed in RTI, they will be removed from their elective until they have shown growth in the supported subject area. Should you have any questions concerning RTI, a student's placement, or how a student can move out of RTI, please contact Stephanie Hope or John Smith.**

Band: Students with prior band experience may take 6th Grade Band. In this class, students will continue refining and expanding on their previous musical fundamentals and performance skills. In addition to a few normal class supplies, students are expected to obtain an instrument, instrument maintenance accessories, and our band method book. Instead of obtaining an instrument, percussionists must have a prescribed set of mallets and accessories. Students will have the option to participate in the local solo and ensemble festival. Advanced students will be given permission to audition for local honor band clinics. As part of the course grade, all students are expected to perform in concerts, which take place outside of the school day. 6th graders with no prior band experience that are interested in joining band should contact the band director.

Chorus: The primary focus of this class will be performing choral music in concert. Students will learn the basics of choral singing in the traditional style, as well as vocal health, reading choral music, breath control, scales, and expanding vocal range. A wide variety of performance music is selected, including both sacred and secular choral literature. As part of the course grade, students will be expected to perform in concerts, some of which occur outside of the normal school day. During these concerts, performers will be required to wear the JMS chorus uniform of a chorus t-shirt and jeans. **No prior choir experience is necessary; new students to chorus are welcome to enroll in this course.**

Guided Study: Designed to teach students various academic skills necessary for success at the middle school level, students can receive help in organization, note-taking, planning study time, active study strategies, and grade averaging. They are encouraged to take increasing personal responsibility for their own learning. Small group setting allows for individual problem solving and troubleshooting with everyday academic obstacles. Students are enrolled based on greatest academic need.

Orchestra: Orchestra is for students with some prior string instrument experience. Students play in performances at school and in area concerts. Students learn further bowing techniques, shifting, good sound production, and proper intonation in a variety of keys. Students participate in a festival competition in the spring.

Classes Recommended by Teacher for Extra Support

RTI- (Response To Intervention) is a multi-tier approach to the early identification and support of students with learning needs.

Tier 1: The Whole Class (every student is served at this level)

In the general education classroom, the teacher measures everyone's skills. This is known as a [universal screening](#) that is given 3 times a year to the whole school (Fall, Winter and Spring) to determine the students that fall at the 25th percentile or below for extra Tier 1 support. If your child falls at or below the 25th percentile your child will be placed in a Tier 2 or Tier 3 class in the areas of Math or English to provide more support because they are performing below their grade level. The screening helps the teacher work with students in small groups based on their skill levels. The school will let you know if your child is struggling and will update you on his/her RTI progress. If your child scores at the Tier 2 or Tier 3 level they will be taken out of one or both of their electives. This class is a revolving door class, which means your child can make their way out of the class with showing progress and gains above the 25th percentile. A goal is made for your child in their Tier 2/3 class an academic goal is developed in the progress monitoring software. It takes on the average 6 weeks for the progress monitoring tool to show if your child is making progress on their goal.

During the intervention, the RTI team monitors students' progress to see who might need additional support. Many students respond successfully to Tier 1 support and achieve grade-level expectations.

Tier 2: Small Group Interventions (25th percentile-11th percentile)

If your child isn't making adequate progress in Tier 1, he/she will start to receive more targeted help. This is *in addition* to the regular classroom instruction (Tier 1), not a replacement for it. Tier 2 interventions take place every day during a designated period and won't miss any core instruction in the classroom.

During these extra help sessions, he/she will be taught in small groups using a different method than in Tier 1 because the first method wasn't successful. The teacher may also ask you to work with your child at home on certain skills. The school will monitor your child's progress so it's clear whether the Tier 2 intervention is helping through 4 ½ week progress reports sent by the school.

Tier 3: Intensive Interventions (at or below 10th percentile)

Typically, only a small percentage of the class will require Tier 3 support. In many schools, though, that number is much higher. If your child needs Tier 3 support, it will be tailored to his/her needs. Every day he/she will receive one-on-one instruction or work in very small groups.

Your child will continue to spend most of the day in the general education classroom. If he/she doesn't make adequate progress in Tier 3, it's likely that the school will recommend an evaluation for special education services. The school will monitor your child's progress so it's clear whether the Tier 3 intervention is helping through 4 ½ week progress reports sent by the school.

Core Focus: (English or Math) This class is for those students that score close to above the 25th percentile or the teacher has identified will benefit from extra support with current core classes. Students will be able to work on homework intermittently during the week and may need re-teaching of Tier 1 instruction.