

## 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Syllabus for 2010-2011 School Year

**Curriculum Outline:** Curriculum is determined using the Arizona State 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Standards as a foundation. Every month students will receive a calendar with the month's class trips, school events, big assignments' due dates, quizzes, and tests. Please pay close attention to these calendars, but remember that they are subject to change and any changes will be noted by your child in his/her agenda.

**Math:** Most students will use the Scott Foresman/Addison Wesley 6<sup>th</sup> Grade math book. Math manipulatives will be used to model most concepts. There will be math homework every night, Monday through Thursday, and each assignment is worth 2 points. To receive full credit, all work must be shown neatly. There will be a math quiz every Friday worth 10 points, unless there is a test scheduled that week. Algebra is a huge theme throughout the year, but we will also cover decimals, fractions, ratios, percents, positive and negative integers, geometry, statistics, measurement, and basic number theory. In-class practice problems are not sufficient to master the 6<sup>th</sup> grade standards; homework and at-home studying of the material presented in class is crucial to mastery.

**Science:** The major science units that we will cover include: plant biology, environmental quality, atmosphere and natural cycles, human biology, and energy. The science book that we will use as a resource is Houghton-Mifflin's 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Science Textbook. Science curriculum will be covered by using non-fiction texts, inquiry-based experiments, reports, field trips, presentations by local scientists, and a school science fair project that we will begin in December.

**Social Studies:** The major social studies units that we will cover include: foundations of cultures (religions and governments), Ancient American cultures, Mesopotamia, Egypt and Nubia, Ancient China, Ancient India, Ancient Africa, Ancient Greece, Ancient Rome, European Middle Ages, and European Renaissance. Geography will be covered through a year-long project and educational newspapers dedicated to different regions. The social studies textbook that we will use as a resource is Houghton-Mifflin's *Discover Our Heritage*.

**Language Arts-Writing:** By the end of the year, students will have produced one or more of the following genres of writing: research paper centralized on a thesis statement, informational report, literature response, persuasive essay, personal narrative, original poetry, and functional text. Students will have a daily writing workshop where they work through the writing process on their pieces: planning, drafting, editing, revising, and publishing.

**Language Arts- Reading:** Students will participate in an independent reading program that I call "U-pick-it". Students will read through a number of genres

throughout the year and engage in literary analysis through a variety of activities designed to enhance their critical thinking skills. In addition to U-pick-it, students will alternatively have book clubs where they will have a choice of book and group based on various genres.

**Language Arts- Spelling and Vocabulary:** To broaden students' vocabulary, we will use a program called "Flocabulary." This program is made up of numerous raps that allow students to hear, see, and write new vocabulary words. Every two weeks they will receive a new song that includes 15 vocabulary words. Upon the completion of each vocabulary list, students will demonstrate their knowledge through a vocab. test. As the year progresses, we will have cumulative vocab. evaluations. Spelling tests will occur every Thursday, and will be made up of frequently misspelled words and vocabulary words. .

**How much homework should we expect?**

Expect that students will have approximately one hour of homework, Mondays through Thursdays. There will be daily math homework, spelling/vocab review, and at home read aloud. Additionally, there will be work to be completed at home for large projects and assignments. Homework is a chance for kids to practice what they have learned in school, I will not assign busy work or work just for the sake of work. Each day students will leave school with assignments written down in their agendas.

**What do you mean "at home read aloud"?**

Every night students are to read aloud for at least 10 minutes. This gives them the opportunity to improve their oral reading fluency in a safe environment and to further their progress in their book selections. They are to keep a log of their reading minutes, book read, and pages read in their agendas. A parent signature is due in the agenda every Friday morning- please sign on Thursday evenings. This is an assignment and is worth 4 points weekly- reading must be documented and confirmed with a parent signature weekly.

**How many book reports will students have?**

Students will have one book report per trimester. You will be seeing the first assignment soon!

**How will student assignments be graded?**

Projects, assignments, and quizzes will be graded based on rubrics, achievement, and effort. I will consistently and clearly share the expectations at the start of an assignment. Most assignments will have a point-value. Completed homework assignments will be worth 2 points per day, quizzes will be worth 10 points, and tests and reports will typically be worth 50 points (unless otherwise noted). Like other grade levels at Mountain School, the report cards will communicate whether the students have met specific academic and behavioral standards. Report cards will also reflect a letter grade earned in English, social studies, math, and science.

### What are the Classroom rules?

The classroom rules will be decided as a class during the first couple weeks of school. A behavioral contract will be sent home once the rules are established for students, parents, and teacher to sign. Please see the Mountain School Parent Handbook for details on school-wide policies. Community circle will occur daily to talk about classroom issues and to build a strong, supportive community within our class.

### What if a student chooses to break a rule?

1<sup>st</sup> time: student's name will be written on the board = warning

2<sup>nd</sup> time: 1 check next to name, lose first recess and fill out behavioral reflection sheet

Pink slips will be written and documented in the office according to the parent handbook.

*Note:* Individual behavioral plans may need to be developed by the teacher, student, and parent if necessary.

### Are there rewards for good behavior?

Yes, the class and individual students will be rewarded with activities, privileges, and a positive learning environment. All class trips must be earned and are considered a privilege.

### What field trips will my sixth grader go on?

I have several day trips planned that complement and enrich the subject areas. An end-of-the-year camping trip is also tentatively planned. Trips must be earned by the class and by individual students. Students will have to demonstrate that they are in good academic standing and behaving appropriately to be able to attend school-day field trips and sleepovers. Parents will often be invited as chaperones on the trips. There will be a limit to how many chaperones are needed according to the trip and the logistical needs, the needs will be communicated in newsletters. Parents will need to have fingerprint clearance cards on-file with the office before attending any trips. I appreciate your understanding of the time and effort it takes to plan these exciting and unique educational experiences.

### What is the 6<sup>th</sup> grade Classroom food policy?

Students can eat raw fruits and vegetables throughout the day as long as they do not leave baggies or Tupperware containers behind. Students have a morning recess period where they can eat healthy snacks daily, as well as a lunch period and afternoon recess. Students may drink water (no colored beverages please) in the classroom throughout the day, and are encouraged to have a water bottle at their desks.

### What are the parent volunteering opportunities?

Whether you want to arrange a regular volunteer schedule, teach a mini-lesson, help with special events, organize book orders, or stop by to lend a hand in classroom tasks, I appreciate all of your assistance and participation. It is best for our classroom environment if you communicate when you will be in the classroom with Ms. Laurie rather than just stopping by. I will have a parent volunteer sign-up at Orientation Night and will frequently request parent volunteers in the weekly newsletter.

### How will parents know what is going on?

Every week a newsletter will be posted online at the Mountain School website. Please check the newsletter on MONDAYS to know what the students are studying, upcoming events, and any other news. If there are any changes, they will be reflected in the students' agendas. Big projects typically require a parent signature so that you are aware of what has been assigned and are able to support your child in budgeting his/her time.

### How can I contact a teacher?

Email is the best way to reach me (I'll check it in the morning and right after school), [lauriea@mountaincharterschool.com](mailto:lauriea@mountaincharterschool.com), or you may call the school at 779-2392 during school hours, leave a message and I will return your call as soon as possible. Please do not call my cell to reach me. If you need to contact a specials teacher, please call Ms. Audra at the front desk.

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