

W E L C O M E T O



RESPECT
RESPONSIBILITY
WORK HARD

It is our pleasure to welcome you to Wisdom Lane Middle School. We hope that your next three years with us are fun and enjoyable.

Please use the attached information to help you better navigate 6th grade.



KEEP CALM
AND
WELCOME TO MIDDLE SCHOOL

SAMPLE 6TH GRADE SCHEDULE

Period	Day 1	Day 2
1	Reading/Language Arts	Reading/Language Arts
2	Reading/Language Arts	Reading/Language Arts
3	Social Studies	Social Studies
4	Math	Math
5	Music	Math Lab
6	Science	Science
7	Lunch	Lunch
8	Work Study/AIS	Physical Education
9	Specials F & C (2Qs) Art (1Q) and Health (1Q)	Specials F & C (2Qs) Art (1Q) and Health (1Q)

Sixth Grade Math

The middle school curriculum will prepare students for one-year courses in Integrated Algebra, Integrated Geometry, and Integrated Algebra II/ Trigonometry at the high school. Sixth graders will focus on Ratios and Proportional Relationships, The Number System, and Expressions and Equations. Additional topics include Geometry and Statistics and Probability. All math students in third through eighth grade are required to be tested by New York State every Spring. Our accelerated program begins in seventh grade, where selected students combine elements of seventh and eighth grade curricula in order to take the Integrated Algebra Regents exam in eighth grade.

In order to prepare for the sixth grade, students should be fluent with multiplication tables (12 x 12). They should be proficient at operations with decimals to the thousandths place and familiar with operations using money. They should be able to add and subtract fractions and mixed numbers with like denominators. They should be able to compare and order fractions including unlike denominators (with and without the use of a number line) especially with commonly used fractions such as those that might be indicated on ruler, measuring cup, etc.

Sixth Grade Topics

Ratios and Proportional Relationships

- Ratio concepts
- Solve ratio problems

Expressions and Equations

- One-variable equations and inequalities
- Dependent and independent variables

The Number System

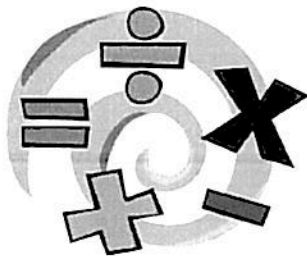
- Multiplication and division of fractions
- Algebraic expressions
- Common factors and multiples
- Rational numbers
- Decimals – All four operations
- Integers – Multiply and divide

Geometry

- Area - Perimeter

Statistics and Probability

- Statistical variability
- Distributions



Reading / Language Arts

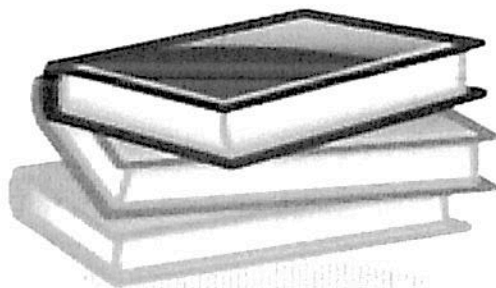
Reading/Language Arts in sixth grade is a double period, which focuses upon the reading of literature and the development of writing skills. The students are given a grade for this double period. Vocabulary, spelling, and grammar are also taught in this class. The reading is comprised of poems, short stories, non-fiction articles and various novels that are read in class, as well as, independently. The writing is comprised of short responses, as well as, multi-paragraph essays.

The Reading/Language Arts program is designed around the New York State Common Core Curriculum. The students will take the state required ELA in the Spring. In June, they are required to take a final exam.

The following is a list of some of the novels the students may read in sixth grade (you might want to get a head start for September):

First Rule of Punk
Freak the Mighty
The Cay
Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key

Jerry Spinelli Novels including:
Library Card
Maniac Magee
Stargirl
Wringer
There's a Girl in My Hammerlock



Social Studies

The Social Studies Program at the middle school provides our students with fundamental training in the art of citizenship and intensive skill development while providing insight into a variety of cultural heritages. The core disciplines of geography and economics are used to develop an understanding of social, political, and historical aspects of various cultures. The sixth grade curriculum focuses on Early Civilizations of the Eastern Hemisphere.

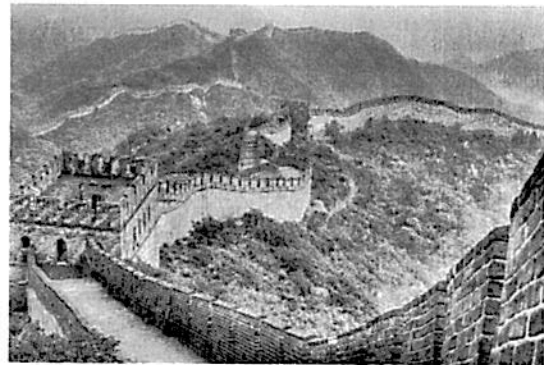
First Semester:

- Geography
- Early Man and Cultures
- Ancient Egypt
- Ancient Mesopotamia
- Ancient India
- Ancient China

Second Semester:

- Ancient Arabia
- Ancient Greece
- Ancient Rome
- Middle Ages
- Renaissance

Students will be afforded a variety of educational experiences. Emphasis is placed on active student involvement in learning. The teaching of social studies skills are built into every classroom activity so that students engage in a systematic and developmental approach to learning how to process information.



Sixth Grade Science

Students will be exposed to basic scientific principles that will make them more literate and knowledgeable about the world in which they live. Emphasis will be placed on laboratory processes and safety through hands-on-activities.

Students entering sixth grade will be introduced, in detail, to the scientific method. Through various experiments and lab activities they will become proficient in creating and implementing a controlled study. Students will also explore the basic concepts of Chemistry and Physics with an overall focus on hands-on activities.

Skills Needed:

- Taking Measurements
- Making Inferences
- Creating a Hypothesis
- Writing a Procedure
- Drawing Conclusions from Data
- Note Taking
- Study Skills

Suggested Reading:

Any science based (age appropriate) articles found in magazines/newspapers

Physical Education

Sixth grade Physical Education students will be issued a lock and a locker during the first days of school. This is so they change out of their school clothes and into their Physical Education shorts or sweats, tee shirt, and sneakers. They may also bring warmer clothing, as we will try to stay outside as long as possible. Sixth grade students cannot participate in interscholastic athletics until the seventh grade. However, we have an extensive intramural program, which is quite popular with our students. As far as grading is concerned, we ask that all students change for class, participate to the best of their ability, demonstrate respect, good behavior and sportsmanship to their teacher as well as their classmates.

Health

In the Health class, students learn about their physical, mental and social needs in order to better understand themselves. Emphasis is placed on the development of decision-making skills that pertain to their total health.

Art

The Scope of learning in sixth grade art emphasizes the use of the Elements and Principles of Design:

Elements: *line, shape, form, color, value, texture, space*

Principles: *balance, movement, rhythm, contrast, emphasis, pattern, unity*

Throughout the students' middle school art experience, they are encouraged to create compositions using these elements and principles. Art history is an integral part of the program. The appreciation of art in the world around them and emphasis on creativity is encouraged at all grade levels.

*To help prepare for this class, students can keep a sketch journal where they can experiment with color, drawing, and imagination.



Family & Consumer Science

Sixth grade students will receive twenty weeks of instruction in Family & Consumer Science. **Instruction includes:**

Self-image/Self-esteem	Character development
Childcare	Careers
Consumer skills	Care of clothing
Basic survival skills	

Throughout the Family & Consumer Science Curriculum, decision-making, problem solving, and management skills are incorporated.

*To help prepare for this course, students can participate at home in everyday life skills, such as household chores.



The Description of Music Courses

Beginning Orchestra – The Beginning Orchestra is open to all sixth graders who would like to play a string instrument, and to sixth graders who need help reading music. Students are offered instruction on viola, cello and bass. Students will be able to rent an instrument from the school and take the instrument home for daily practicing.

6th Grade Orchestra – The 6th Grade Orchestra consists of sixth graders who already know how to play a string instrument and are able to read music. Students are required to perform in the Winter and Spring Concerts. Lessons will be given on a rotating schedule. Students will be able to rent an instrument from the school and take the instrument home for daily practicing.

6th Grade Chorus – The 6th Grade chorus will perform various styles of music, including classical, jazz, Broadway, folk songs and popular. Students will learn how to read music and understand rhythms and note values. The student's knowledge of musical concepts is measured through class work, tests and vocal tests. Various performances will be given, including the Winter and Spring Concerts. All students are required to attend each concert.

Beginning Band – The Beginning Band is open to all sixth graders who would like to play a band instrument, and to sixth graders who need help reading music. Students in the Beginning Band will be able to choose an instrument from a limited selection of wind and brass instruments. Lessons will be given on a rotating schedule. Students will be able to rent an instrument from the school and take the instrument home for daily practicing.

6th Grade Band – This class is open to any student who has already played a band instrument and is able to read music. Lessons will be given on a rotating schedule. Students are required to perform in the Winter and Spring Concerts and the Memorial Day Parade. Students will be able to rent an instrument from the school and take the instrument home for daily practicing.

General Music – This course will provide the student with a broad overview of the world of music. General Music students will have an opportunity to learn how instruments work and how they are played. Students will learn about musical styles and will discover how the great musicians wrote their music. They will also write and perform their own music. The students' knowledge of musical concepts is measured through class work, tests, and various projects.

THE SCHOOL COUNSELING DEPARTMENT

School Counselors, New York State Certified and professionally trained, act as liaisons between the students and school to ensure academic and social emotional success. Middle school counselors are available to listen, encourage, and assist students' development academically, personally, and socially, as well as increase communication, provide support, act as student advocates, and serve as a resource for parents. The School Counseling Department benefits students, parents, teachers and administrators while placing a great emphasis on creating a positive and supportive learning environment.

Parents should feel free to contact the office at any time with any questions or concerns. Individual appointments can be made as needed. Students are encouraged to seek out their Counselor with any issues or concerns they may have at any time.

It is normal to feel a little nervous about setting out on this new adventure, but middle school will provide you with lots of fun things to do, new people to interact with and lots of information that will help you grow and learn. We will be there to support you every step of the way. Counselors serve as the primary link between parents and the middle school. In the elementary school, a parent is accustomed to dealing with one classroom teacher and a building administrator. In middle school, where students have as many as ten or eleven teachers, parents are sometimes unclear as to whom they should contact. Counselors become the contact person and can help direct parents to the most helpful source.

What can parents do to help the success of their child?

- ✓ Check the student's agenda book each day for daily and long range assignments.
- ✓ Write down each teacher's extra help schedule, so it is there when you need it.
- ✓ Extra help schedule will be posted on our website in the Fall.
- ✓ Attend back to school night.
- ✓ Correspond/communicate with teachers: a parent can always leave a message for a teacher at the main office.
- ✓ Discuss time management with the student and participation in extra help if necessary.
- ✓ Review student progress on tests, quizzes, and homework.
- ✓ Discuss progress reports and report cards with the student.

GET ORGANIZED FOR SCHOOL SUCCESS

Students with unruly notebooks, torn or crumpled-up papers in their backpacks, desks or lockers, could find it's harder to make the grade. A little time spent getting organized can go a long way toward improving grades and performance in school.

USE COLOR. Color-coordinate binders, notebooks, folders and textbooks so that you can easily grab the items you need for specific classes.

CREATE TO-DO LISTS. Use an assignment pad, day planner or simply a piece of paper to keep track of assignments and things that are complete. Use one side of a folder for items that aren't yet completed, and the other for completed work.

TAKE NOTES. Pay attention in class and take dated notes. This way you know what date range to study for a specific test.

ORGANIZE BOOKS TO YOUR SCHEDULE. Do you have Language Arts, then Math, then Science? Stack your books in your desk or locker in order so that you can easily grab what you need.

PRIORITIZE TASKS. Complete the short-notice tasks first while continuing to complete parts of long-term tasks. Also, work first on homework assignments that are a struggle to you so that you can breeze through easier assignments at the end of a homework session.

LEAVE ENOUGH TIME. Rushing around in the morning to catch a ride or bus to school may cause you to forget important items at home. Leaving yourself enough time to get ready to head out to school is a major organizational step.

KEEP ON TOP OF CLUTTER. Go through compiled papers weekly to see what you can toss. Save only necessary items for studying.

GET ENOUGH REST. A well-rested body and mind is much better equipped to handle the daily stresses of school life. Trying to be organized while scatterbrained is no way to start out.

SCHEDULE CONSISTENT STUDY TIMES. Plan to study or do homework at the same time each day so you don't feel overwhelmed.

REWARD YOURSELF FOR A JOB WELL DONE. It's much easier to stay on track if you have a goal. Work toward that goal, and then reward yourself when you achieve it. A good grade – plus a day out with friends – is a nice treat.

-Metro Services

TIPS FOR PARENTS

SHORT STOPS

Listening and Learning

At the library, choose a book on tape or DVD to listen to with your child. Then, when you're in the car together (going to practice, picking up dinner), pop in the next installment.

Talking about what you've heard will build your child's listening and conversation skills – and you'll enjoy the time together.

Recognize respect

When your child shows respect, let them know you appreciate it. For example, if they speak politely to you even though they disagree with what you say, you might tell them, "Thank you for talking to me with respect." You'll encourage more of the same.

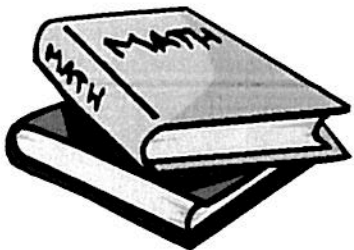
Worth quoting

"The time is always right to do what is right." *Martin Luther King Jr.*

Just for fun

Q: What did one math book say to the other?

A: I have a lot of problems.



Testing tips

"Tests are easy,"

some students

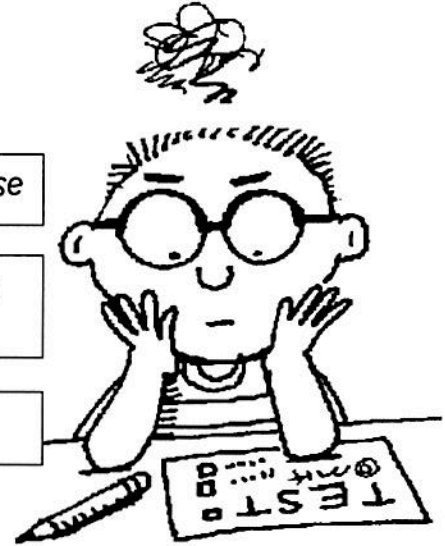
say. "It's the questions that are hard." But test questions aren't so difficult if your child understands how to handle them.

Help your child tackle tough questions by sharing these strategies:

True or False

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Essay?



True or false

As a general rule, a question should be answered false if any part of the statement is untrue. Suggest that your child look for words like *all*, *none* and *always*. These may be clues that the answer is false. *Example:* "All the soldiers in the Revolutionary War were American." At the same time, words like *often* and *may* usually signal that a statement is true.

Multiple Choice

With these questions, it's important your youngster read every choice

before choosing an answer. This allows them to rule out answers they know are wrong. Using this strategy, your child may have two options to pick from instead of five, which increases their chances of selecting the correct answer.

Essay

Encourage your child to read each question at least twice before answering. Making an outline will help organize their thoughts so the writing is clear and flows smoothly. When finished writing, they should check spelling, capitalization and punctuation.

ATTENDANCE MATTERS!

Children need to know that attending class each day is a vital part of their education. You can help your child by keeping these tips in mind:

- Insist that homework be completed each night. It's easier for your child to feel good about going to school when they keep up with their work.
- Schedule dental visits and other appointments after school hours whenever possible.

HEALTHY HOMEWORK HABITS



It's important

You probably know that homework is an important part of middle school success. That's why it's important to set aside regular times to do homework every day.

First things first

Doing some of your homework during work study is a great use of time. But chances are you'll still need to bring some assignments home. So make it a rule to always get homework done before you have fun!

Comfortable and quiet, please!

Your homework will go more quickly, and you'll get a lot more out of it, if you work in a space that's pleasant and free of noise and distractions. What place in your home fits the bill?

Does *your* homework routine meet the *test*?

1. My study area has plenty of light.	Yes	No
2. I have a comfortable chair to sit in while I study.	Yes	No
3. My homework area is away from the TV, telephone and other distractions.	Yes	No
4. I have plenty of pens, paper, books and supplies close to my study area.	Yes	No
5. An older family member is nearby to help answer homework questions if I have them.	Yes	No
6. My study area is fairly quiet (for example, I can barely hear my brother practicing his guitar).	Yes	No
7. My friends know not to call or stop by during homework time.	Yes	No
8. I only use the internet for study-related activities when I'm doing homework.	Yes	No
9. I know what to do because I bring my agenda book home every day.	Yes	No

How'd you do?

The more yes answers you had, the better. If you answered no a few times, do what you can to improve your homework habits. For help, go the *What's Up WITH STARTING MIDDLE SCHOOL* Web site for your very own homework planner.