



## Course Overviews for Grade Six

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## Humanities (World History and Geography) – Grade 6

(This course is offered in English, French and Spanish—see Languages for details.)

### Course Overview

This interdisciplinary course (focused on world history and geography) aims to enable students, through learning about the fundamental concepts of *time and space*, *cause and consequence*, *continuity and change*, and *similarity and difference*, to:

- develop the skills necessary for the effective study of history and geography
- discover an interest and enjoyment in learning about the past and making connections with the present
- develop the realization that there are many different interpretations of the past
- explore the earth, its inhabitants and the interaction of people with their environment
- organize their spatial knowledge at local, regional, national and global levels, in a world where information comes from a variety of sources
- value and enjoy the study of geography in an increasingly interdependent world

Information literacy skills are woven into each unit and support the overall aims of the course.

### Content / Units of Study

The curriculum covers the Mediterranean world (Greece and Rome), India and China during the classical period (500 B.C.E. - 500 C.E.). The focus areas are:

- What is history and geography?; Primary and secondary sources; calendar and timeline
- Greece: Myth and History; Crete; Mycenae; Homer; Athens; Sparta; Periclean Athens; Alexander and the Hellenistic World
- Rome: Legends of the founding of Rome; the Roman Republic; Pax Romana; the rise and growth of Christianity
- China: Ancient Chinese dynasties from the Shang to the Han; Confucius and other philosophers; ancient Chinese inventions; geography of Asia; the Silk Road
- India: Indus Valley civilization; Aryans; the caste system; Buddhism; Mauryas; Guptas; culture under the Guptas.

### Assessment

A WIS semester grade includes a variety of assessment tasks, including projects, quizzes, tests and class participation. The numbers on the grading scale represent the following values: 7 – Excellent, 6 – Very Good, 5 – Good, 4 – Satisfactory, 3+ and below – Failing.

Assessment is divided into formative (40%), summative (40%) and class participation (20%). Informal ongoing assessment takes place in every class.

### Resources

Adiego, Sancho. *Geografía e historia, 1 ESO*. Tres Cantos, Madrid: Santillana Educación, 2015.

Arias, Stéphan, Éric Chaudron, Fabien Chaumard, and Carine Reynaud. *Histoire Géographie: 6e*. Paris: Belin, 2013. Print.

Spielvogel, Jackson. *Viaje en el tiempo*. Columbus, OH: Glencoe/McGraw Hill, 2006.

Spielvogel, Jackson J. *World History: Journey Across Time*. New York: Glencoe/McGraw-Hill, 2008. Print.

## English (Language A) – Grade 6

### Course Overview

The theme for grade 6 is *Identity*; our throughline is *Who am I?*

### Essential Questions:

- How do we **explore** a work of literature for insight and enjoyment?
- What personal, textual, and global **connections** can we make to literature?
- How can reading and writing about the world help us to **empathize** with others?
- How do we **create** effective communication through written and oral expression?

In grade 6 English, students develop reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills through formative learning opportunities. They demonstrate an understanding of content, organization, style and language in summative assessment. Assignments range from formal essays to journal writing, dramatic performance to small-group presentations, and informal class conversations to formal discussions.

Our study of literature includes short stories, poetry, memoir, drama, and fiction. We use the writing process to create literary essays, flash fiction, and poetry. We engage in class discussions and oral presentations to learn to effectively present our interpretations of literature. We study grammar in the context of the reading and writing we do.

### Texts:

*The Giver* by Lois Lowry

*I am Malala* by Malala Yousafzai

*A Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare

Selected short stories and poetry

### Assessment

A grade 6 English semester grade is a combination of participation, formative, and summative assessments.

The following weighting is used to determine the final grade:

- 60 percent for summative assessments
- 25 percent for formative assessments
- 15 percent for class participation

## Mathematics – Grade 6

### Course Overview

This course aims to:

- extend and strengthen students' mathematics skills with an emphasis on mental agility and accuracy when working with whole numbers, fractions, decimals, and percentages
- extend students' ability to interpret and understand the physical world in mathematical terms
- build students' confidence in and enjoyment of mathematics

### Content / Units of Study

Topics explored over the course of the year include:

*Number Theory:* Students will discover the uses and applications of prime-factorization, least common multiples, and greatest common factors.

*Arithmetic:* Students will review and extend their knowledge of and fluency with whole numbers, decimals, fractions, and the use of percentages.

*Geometry:* Students will study geometrical vocabulary and theory through investigations in area and perimeter of two-dimensional shapes.

### Assessment

A WIS semester grade includes a variety of assessment tasks, including classwork projects, quizzes, and tests. The numbers on the grading scale represent the following values: 7 – Excellent, 6 – Very Good, 5 – Good, 4 – Satisfactory, 3+ and below – Failing.

Informal ongoing assessment takes place in every class.

Students are expected to complete their homework every day; time is devoted in each class to reviewing, checking and discussing homework. Completing homework conscientiously is very important for success in math class.

Summative assessments, including tests are given at the end of each unit. They are always announced well in advance and coordinated with other classes.

## Integrated Science – Grade 6

### Course Overview

Students will be introduced to laboratory techniques and will develop safe practices and confidence to work independently on practical projects.

Specifically, students will:

- learn to appreciate science and its place in a technological world
- be able to carry out simple experiments
- make observations
- collect data
- make simple deductions from findings
- be encouraged to use deductive reasoning to solve scientific problems

### Content / Units of Study

This is the first year of a three-year MS course program, introducing the study of science as an integrated body rather than separate subjects. The course is roughly divided into six units:

<b>Safety and Basic Lab Skills</b>	Learning lab safety, terminology, solubility, and separation techniques.
<b>Measurement</b>	Use of the metric system, measuring instruments, and accuracy including a lab report project on 'pendulums'. Includes speed and velocity.
<b>Density, Mass, &amp; Volume</b>	Properties of liquids, solids, and gases. Relationships between each variable (density, mass, and volume).
<b>Forces &amp; Motion</b>	Gravity, friction, static electricity, magnetism, support and movement in the human skeleton.
<b>Matter &amp; Elements</b>	Kinetic theory of matter, atoms, molecules, Periodic Table including a research project.
<b>Structure of Cells</b>	Study of plant and animal cells, reproduction in plants and animals, including microscope safety and use.

### Assessment

A WIS semester grade includes a variety of assessment tasks, including projects, quizzes, tests and class participation. The numbers on the grading scale represent the following values: 7 – Excellent, 6 – Very Good, 5 – Good, 4 – Satisfactory, 3+ and below – Failing.

Assessment criteria developed by the MS Science Department are used in evaluating major assignments.

Informal ongoing assessment takes place in every class.

## Languages – Grade 6

The language program in grade 6 focuses on written and oral communication. The more advanced courses, intended for native and near-native speakers, put emphasis on reading and interpreting literature in the target language. Enrichment activities enhance the academic program throughout the year. Eligible students will take their Humanities course in the target language (French or Spanish) and will take French or Spanish A. Other students will be placed in the language course based on their proficiency level.

There are language options in the elective block. Students in the Advanced program may take Spanish or French Enrichment, which in grade 6 focuses on practice of the language and an exploration of topics of interest to the students, or they may take **Chinese as an additional language**. If they begin Chinese in grade 6, while they continue their study of Spanish or French in grades 6-12, they would be eligible to take Chinese B in the IB Diploma Program.

A WIS semester grade includes a variety of assessment tasks, including projects, quizzes, tests and class participation. The numbers on the grading scale represent the following values: 7 – Excellent, 6 – Very Good, 5 – Good, 4 – Satisfactory, 3+ and below – Failing. Assessment criteria developed by the MS World Languages Department are used in evaluating major assignments. Informal ongoing assessment takes place in every class.

<b>GRADE 6 LANGUAGE OPTIONS OVERVIEW</b>		
<b><i>Target Second Language</i></b>	<b><i>Humanities</i></b>	<b><i>Other Language Options</i></b>
<b>French A-Advanced</b> for advanced and native speakers	in French 5 periods	Students can opt for French Enrichment for further exposure to the language and Francophone cultures, or they may take beginning Chinese.
<b>French B</b> for beginners	in English 5 periods	Students can opt for French Enrichment for further exposure to the language and Francophone cultures, or take beginning Chinese in the elective block.
<b>French Transitional FAL</b> students	in French 5 periods	Students can opt for French Enrichment or further exposure to the language and Francophone cultures, or they may take beginning Chinese.
<b>Spanish A-Advanced</b> for advanced and native speakers	in Spanish 5 periods	Students can opt for Spanish Enrichment for further exposure to the language and Spanish-speaking cultures, or take beginning Chinese.
<b>Spanish B-Foundation</b> for beginners	in English 5 periods	Students may take beginning Chinese in the elective block.
<b><i>Target Third Language</i></b>	<b><i>Humanities</i></b>	<b><i>Note</i></b>
<b>Chinese B-Foundation</b> for beginners	in English or target second language, depending on French or Spanish placement 5 periods	Students must also be enrolled in either French or Spanish. Chinese B is taken in the elective block.

## Visual Arts – Grade 6

### Course Overview / Content

The Visual Arts program in grade 6 is organized around three major emphases:

#### Knowledge and Understanding

*Visual Expression:* In grade 6 the emphasis is on *Approaches to Learning* and the elements of design (line, color, composition, etc.). Individual artists and art history examples are discussed as they relate to each unit. Students consider how to best approach each assignment while keeping the end result in mind. Through the use of small scale models, sketches and experiments, students will make informed decisions about their work.

#### Application

*Technique:* Early in the year we focus on pattern. The students work in small groups and individually to develop a pattern of sound, which they then represent in visual form. From there students explore other elements of design through the use of printmaking, rubbings, graphite, pens, markers, sun squares, oil pastels and paints. Throughout the year the concept of composition is investigated through the use of basic elements of design.

#### Reflection and Evaluation

*Oral Presentation:* Students are encouraged to consider why they make the aesthetic choices they make in regard to the use of compositional elements, line quality, etc. Through repeated use of art terminology, students are able to explain their work in an informed manner.

### Assessment

A WIS semester grade includes a variety of assessment tasks. The numbers on the grading scale represent the following values: 7 – Excellent, 6 – Very Good, 5 – Good, 4 – Satisfactory, 3+ and below – Failing.

Assessment criteria developed by the Visual Arts and Design Department are used in evaluating major assignments. Teachers and students use grading rubrics and written reflections to assess work at the end of each unit.

Informal ongoing assessment takes place in every class.

## Vocal Music – Grades 6 to 8

### Course Overview

Vocal Music provides students with the opportunity to learn about the societal, historical, aesthetic, and cultural importance of music by way of experience and studied repertoire. The course also gives students a working knowledge of musical language, theory, and terminology. Each grade level also explores musical elements outside of concert repertoire, such as musical theatre, music technology, music listening, and musical identity.

Aims of the course in grades 6-8 are to:

- Instill in each student an understanding of and appreciation for music
- Train students to use proper and professional performance practices
- Expose students to a variety of music genres, styles, time periods, etc.
- Draw connections between music and our own lives
- Encourage students to be lifelong participants in music

### Content / Units of Study

Units of study include guidance through musical concepts, thoughtful listening and analysis, and creative opportunities. Depending on grade level, students will also explore music in theatrical contexts, music technology, and musical identity. Some units of study include singing technique; music theory; and listening and analysis.

Fundamental elements in this course include:

- Music literacy and notation
- Sight-reading
- Music theory
- Vocal techniques - as a soloist and as a member of an ensemble
- Cultural, historical, and aesthetic elements of music
- Music listening and analysis
- Writing about music
- Performance practices

### Assessment

A WIS semester grade includes a variety of assessment tasks, including projects, quizzes, tests and class participation. The numbers on the grading scale represent the following values: 7 – Excellent, 6 – Very Good, 5 – Good, 4 – Satisfactory, 3+ and below – Failing.

In addition to assigned homework, quizzes, and projects, students are informally assessed on a daily basis. Students are primarily assessed on participation. This includes singing in class, being respectful of the ensemble, contributing thoughtfully to class discussions, and putting forth clear effort towards rehearsing concert repertoire.

## **Instrumental Music – Grades 6 to 8**

### **Course Overview**

The aim of Instrumental Music is to instill in each student an understanding and appreciation of music that will enable him or her to be a lifelong participant in music. The course provides all students an opportunity to express themselves musically on a chosen instrument for serious music study and recreational playing, developing music reading and playing skills and allowing for a variety of instrumental ensemble experiences.

### **Content / Units of Study**

Over the course of the three years of Instrumental Music, students will:

- learn and apply proper playing techniques on chosen instrument
- read and play a variety of music in a progression that exposes them to more complex musical concepts, including a wider playing range in different key signatures, and more complex rhythmic patterns and meters, form, dynamics, stylistic ornaments and interpretation
- play major, minor and chromatic scales and arpeggios
- read and play independent parts as members of an ensemble
- sight read
- identify composers and their historical era
- identify historical music eras and various styles
- prepare for winter and spring concerts

### **Assessment**

A WIS semester grade includes a variety of assessment tasks. The numbers on the grading scale represent the following values: 7 – Excellent, 6 – Very Good, 5 – Good, 4 – Satisfactory, 3+ and below – Failing.

Assessment criteria developed by the Performing Arts Department are used in evaluating major assignments.

Informal ongoing assessment takes place in every class.

Students are formally assessed on their preparation for class, their progress in playing proficiency, various homework and project assignments, class participation, performance exams, quizzes on theory and history, and concerts.

## Theatre Arts – Grade 6

### Course Overview

Our guiding philosophy across the theatre arts curriculum is: How do we create and tell compelling stories through performance? Students will gain a general knowledge of world theatre and dramatic processes.

**Essential Questions** guiding the course are:

- How do we establish an effective ensemble?
- How do we show not tell when devising and presenting stories onstage?
- How do we create effective and interesting stories?
- How do we apply story building skills to creating clown stories?
- How do we analyze a script and the characters to create effective costume designs?

### Content / Units of Study

- **Ensemble-work** – Students will engage in theatre activities that allow them to explore and gain the skills required to effectively work together as an ensemble to create theatre.
- **Storytelling through adaptation** – Students will adapt anecdotes and fairy tales for the stage to learn the essential elements of an effective story and how to bring stories to life.
- **Clowning** – Students will study the greats (i.e. Charlie Chaplin, The Marx Brothers, The 3 Stooges, Mr. Bean, I Love Lucy, etc.), gain mime skills, study what makes the greats so funny, create an individual clown character, and apply their story-telling skills to creating short clown scenes.
- **Commedia Dell’Arte** – Students will learn about the historical background of Commedia and apply their knowledge to developing short Commedia scenes.
- **Costume Design** – If there is time left in the semester, students will gain a basic knowledge of theatrical design concepts and apply them to designing costumes for the play they read in English class, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*.

### Assessment

A WIS semester grade includes a variety of assessment tasks, including projects, quizzes, tests and class participation. The numbers on the grading scale represent the following values: 7 – Excellent, 6 – Very Good, 5 – Good, 4 – Satisfactory, 3+ and below – Failing. Assessment criteria developed by the Performing Arts Department are used in evaluating major assignments. Informal ongoing assessment takes place in every class.

Performance Projects – 50%

- Understanding Concepts: demonstrate ability to articulate practices and methodologies.
- Application: ability to develop and advance use of materials/investigation; developing personally unique methodologies.

Quizzes/Written Work/Reflection – 20%

- Critical awareness: reflection; ability to analyze own/ others’ work objectively and use the appropriate vocabulary.

Participation – 30%

- Growth and personal engagement: individual initiative, preparedness and participation; appropriate behavior and use of materials.
- Assessment tools include participation, journal entries, performances, written assignments, self and peer review.

## **Physical Education/Health – Grades 6 to 8**

### **Course Overview**

Students in grades 6-8 take three hours of Physical Education and one hour of Health per 8-day cycle.

The aims of our physical education courses are to develop physically fit, emotionally aware, and socially adept individuals who are comfortable taking risks and thriving in a globally-complex environment. Through inquiry and with an emphasis on personal responsibility, we create learners who have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to enjoy and embrace a lifetime of healthful physical activity.

The health program aims to explore physical, social and emotional health topics to broaden students knowledge and awareness. Connections to students adolescent development enhance interest, understanding, and inquiry, leading students toward mindfulness regarding their healthy lifestyle. The ultimate goal is to facilitate the development of healthy attitudes and to increase students' knowledge of critical issues they are facing as adolescents.

### **Course Content/Units of Study**

In physical education, students may have the opportunity to participate in the following units while at WIS. These units may not be offered each year due to facilities availability and weather constraints. They include cooperative games, badminton, basketball, flag football, soccer, volleyball, team handball, weight training, Ultimate Frisbee, physical education and technology, conditioning, dance, self-defense, and yoga.

In Health, topics covered will include, but not be limited to, puberty, healthy relationships, self-esteem/body image, diet and nutrition, digital citizenship, peer pressure, and bullying, character education, addictions/drugs and alcohol, and sleep.

### **Assessment**

A WIS semester grade includes a variety of assessment tasks. The numbers on the grading scale represent the following values: 7 – Excellent, 6 – Very Good, 5 – Good, 4 – Satisfactory, 3+ and below – Failing.

Assessment criteria developed by the Physical Education/Health Department are used in assessing major assignments. Students in Health receive a pass/fail grade.

Informal ongoing assessment takes place in every class.

## **Design Technology – Grades 6 to 8**

### **Course Overview**

Students in grades 6-8 may take Design Technology for one semester as an elective option. Students undertake a variety of challenges and projects, which involve some or all of the five phases of the design cycle: investigate a problem, design a solution or a product, plan the steps through which that solution will be created, create the product/solution, and then evaluate the entire process.

These challenges and projects are specially set so as to encourage the student to use and extend knowledge acquired in science, math, and other courses. While working through the challenges and projects, students learn a variety of techniques, which enable them to work confidently with a wide variety of materials.

### **Content/Units of Study**

In order to learn about the design cycle, grade 8 students will research, design, plan, construct, test, and evaluate a spaghetti tower. Then, given a challenging set of design specifications, they will design and construct a vertical, free-standing marble maze. This project is particularly long and complex and will take most of the semester.

### **Assessment**

A WIS semester grade includes a variety of assessment tasks. The numbers on the grading scale represent the following values: 7 – Excellent, 6 – Very Good, 5 – Good, 4 – Satisfactory, 3+ and below – Failing.

Assessment criteria developed by the Visual Arts and Design Department are used in evaluating major assignments.

Students are often assessed formatively in terms of their “work in progress.” Students are primarily graded on the quality of their work during the design process, as well as how productively, efficiently and safely they work in class, and how well their product performs up to the specifications of a particular project.

Most projects culminate with self-assessment, allowing students to reflect on what went well with the design/construction process and what did not.

## Digital Media Workshop – Grade 6

### Course Overview

As an introduction to storytelling with media, featuring digital media tools and techniques, this hands-on course will have students create and publish their own digital media projects. They will discuss the following questions throughout the course: *What is the purpose of media in our society? How can the media we use contribute to the stories we tell?* They will use the following tools: photography, video, audio, blogging, design and coding/programming. Students will use a combination of digital tools in the planning and creation of projects with an emphasis on creative storytelling.

### Content / Units of Study

In grade 6 students will:

- be introduced to blogs, digital photography, and audio recording and editing
- study how technology has developed over time
- learn the fundamentals of digital filmmaking and editing
- hone digital media presentation skills
- explore the work of artists and media makers across disciplines
- practice the design cycle with regular feedback and opportunities for revision

Each unit will feature a project, giving students the opportunity to build an electronic portfolio of their work.

### Assessment

A WIS semester grade includes a variety of assessment tasks, including projects, quizzes, tests and class participation. The numbers on the grading scale represent the following values: 7 – Excellent, 6 – Very Good, 5 – Good, 4 – Satisfactory, 3+ and below – Failing.

Assessment criteria developed by the Visual Arts & Design Department are used in evaluating major assignments.

Students are often assessed formatively on their “work in progress.” They are graded primarily on the quality of their work during the design process, as well as how productively, efficiently and cooperatively they work in class, and on how well their product performs up to the specifications of a particular project.

Most projects culminate with self-assessment, allowing students to reflect on what went well with the design process and what did not.

## Building Your Brain Power – Grades 6 and 7

### Course Overview

This semester-long course designed for students in Grades 6 and 7. This course will explore how the brain and nervous system work in order to promote building strong neurological connections that will positively impact learning and memory. Additionally, students will explore different study strategies and student skills that work best for different academic goals.

We will explore using particular note-taking, writing, and reading comprehension strategies, as well as practicing techniques for taking tests and breaking down big projects and tasks. Students will also focus on how they learn best and what tools they can use to support work in their content area classes. Emphasis will be on learning about study skills, metacognition, Growth Mindset, neuroscience, and the function of the brain.

### Content/Units of Study

Students will explore the following topics:

- The Brain and the Nervous System – How does the brain work? What are the component parts of the brain?
- Learning and Memory – How does the brain work to build your memory? What strategies can you use to remember things? How does your brain make connections to help your memory?
- Learning about Learning – What is Metacognition? What are your learning strengths? How can you become a more self-aware student?
- Organization and Study Skills – What are study skills? Which strategies work best for you with different types of tasks?
- Facing Challenges and a Growth Mindset – What are fixed and growth mindsets? How does mindfulness and optimism help build your brainpower?

Texts used include:

*The Middle School Student's Guide to Study Skills* by Susan Mulcaire

*Phineas Gage: The Gruesome but True Story About Brain Science* by John Fleischman

### Assessment

A WIS semester grade includes a variety of assessment tasks, including projects, quizzes, tests and class participation. Assessment criteria developed by the teacher are used in evaluating major assignments. Informal ongoing assessment takes place in every class.

Sample assessments are:

A multimedia project involving teaching others about the function of the brain.

A personal learning journal that summarizes each student's learning strengths and keeps track of study and learning strategies that work best for each student.

A two-page reflection showing how the student used particular study strategies in a content area.

The numbers on the grading scale represent the following values: 7 – Excellent, 6 – Very Good, 5 – Good, 4 – Satisfactory, 3+ and below – Failing.

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