Acton-Agua Dulce UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
HIGH DESERT SCHOOL
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6th Grade Science Syllabus
2025-2026

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Phone Number: 661-269-0310 ext. 314 **Room:** 314
Google Classroom Code: dupnm7rs

Course Description

Welcome to 6th Grade Earth Science! This year we will explore our dynamic planet through the Amplify Earth Science curriculum, covering topics such as geology, weather, climate, and Earth's systems. In addition, we will enrich our learning with lessons from Population Education, which highlight the connection between humans and the environment, helping students think critically about global challenges like resource use, natural hazards, and sustainability.

6th Grade Earth Science Units

1. Geology on Mars

Students investigate surface features on Mars and Earth to determine if a particular Martian landscape was formed by volcanic activity, flowing water, or wind. They learn how scientists use evidence and reasoning to make claims about planetary processes.

2. Plate Motion

Students explore the Earth's outer layer and how tectonic plates move. They learn how plate boundaries cause earthquakes, volcanoes, and mountain formation through hands-on modeling and data analysis.

3. Rock Transformations

This unit focuses on how rocks change over time due to heat, pressure, and weathering. Students examine the rock cycle and explore how rocks provide evidence of Earth's geologic history.

4. Ocean, Atmosphere, and Climate (Marine Biology)

In this unit, students examine how ocean currents and atmospheric circulation affect regional climates. They analyze data to compare different locations and explore the factors that influence long-term climate patterns.

5. Weather Patterns

Students analyze temperature, wind, and precipitation data to understand how weather systems move. They explore how air masses interact and learn how meteorologists predict weather.

6. Earth's Changing Climate

Students investigate the causes and effects of Earth's changing climate. They look at carbon dioxide levels, temperature trends, and the role of human activity in long-term environmental change.

Assessment & Grading

In 6th grade science, your grade reflects your effort, mastery, and creativity. You'll be assessed in a variety of ways—some while you're learning and practicing, and others after you've had time to build your skills and knowledge. Grades will be updated regularly in **Aeries**. Students and families are encouraged to check progress often and reach out with any questions or concerns.

Formative Assessments – 35% of Final Grade

Formative assessments are "checkpoints" during learning. These help you (and me) track progress, identify strengths, and address areas for improvement. They are usually lower-stakes and help prepare you for summative tasks. These tasks focus on effort, participation, and growth.

Examples:

- Warm-ups and exit tickets
- Science notebook entries
- Class discussions and group work
- Diagrams, models, and quick writes
- Practice quizzes or informal reflections
- Independent work

Summative Assessments – 65% of Final Grade

Summative assessments occur after instruction and are designed to measure what you have learned. These higher-stakes assessments evaluate how well you understand key science concepts and how effectively you can apply your knowledge independently. They demonstrate your mastery of the material.

Examples:

- Unit quizzes and tests
- Projects and performance

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage Range	Description
A	90–100%	Excellent understanding and consistent effort
B	80–89%	Proficient understanding with solid effort
C	70–79%	Basic understanding; may need improvement in effort or accuracy
D	60–69%	Limited understanding; significant improvement needed
F	59% and below	Incomplete understanding; requires additional support

Behavior Expectations: We SOAR in Science

In our classroom, we follow our school's PBIS expectations by striving to SOAR every day:

S – Strive to Be Your Best

- Come prepared with your Chromebook, journal, and supplies
- Stay engaged, participate actively, and give your best effort
- Embrace challenges and keep a growth mindset

O – Own Your Actions

- Follow directions the first time
- Take responsibility for your work, choices, and behavior
- Admit mistakes and work to fix them—we're all learning together

A – Act Responsibly

- Use time wisely and stay on task
- Handle lab materials and technology with care

R – Respect All

- Listen when others are speaking
- Use kind and appropriate language
- Value all ideas and contributions during group work
- Treat classmates, teachers, and materials with care

If Expectations Aren't Met

We will use restorative practices and reflection when needed. Consequences may include:

- Reminder and redirection
- Private check-in or behavior reflection
- Parent/guardian contact
- Office referral (for repeated or serious concerns)

We SOAR not just in behavior, but in how we treat others and take pride in our work. Let's build a classroom where everyone feels safe, supported, and excited to learn.

Lunch Detention Policy

To support positive behavior and provide a structured opportunity for reflection, our 5th and 6th grade team has established a **lunch detention rotation**:

- Each 5th/6th grade teacher will be assigned **one day per week** to supervise lunch detention.
- Students who receive detention on that day **or after lunch the previous day** will attend lunch detention with the assigned teacher.
- Lunch detention is a time for students to reflect on their choices, complete missed work, or discuss ways to improve behavior moving forward.
- Students will be walked to the cafeteria to get their lunch and return to the classroom to eat.

This system ensures consistency and fairness in addressing behavior while keeping students engaged in a positive way.

Materials Needed

- Science Interactive Notebook (spiral notebook)
- Amplify workbook, provided for units as needed
- Pencils and highlighters
- Colored pencils or markers
- Folder/section in binder for science