



Sixth Grade Curriculum Guide

● ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS · STUDYSYNC

● MATHEMATICS · ENVISION

● SCIENCE · ELEVATE SCIENCE

● SOCIAL STUDIES · MCGRAW HILL

● ELECTIVES

About this guide: This document describes the instructional programs, standards, pacing, and expectations for all Sixth Grade students at Southfield Public Schools. It is intended to support teachers, families, and administrators in understanding what students learn and why.

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SECTION 1

Our Instructional Philosophy

Southfield Public Schools provides rigorous, joyful, and equitable instruction for every student. In Sixth Grade, we build on Fifth Grade foundations while expanding students' capacity to read, think, communicate, and problem-solve across all content areas.

ALL STUDENTS CAN AND WILL READ

We use the Science of Reading to deliver explicit, systematic literacy instruction to every student. McGraw-Hill StudySync ensures all students receive the structured, rigorous text-based instruction their minds need for college and career readiness.

CURIOSITY DRIVES SCIENCE LEARNING

Students learn by investigating real phenomena. Elevate Science by Savvas anchors every unit in a question worth investigating and builds authentic scientific thinking through three-dimensional NGSS-aligned instruction.

KNOWLEDGE FUELS COMPREHENSION

Strong readers bring deep knowledge to complex texts. Students who build rich background knowledge across history, science, geography, and literature become stronger readers and thinkers over time. Our programs deliberately build this foundation at every grade level.

English Language Arts

● McGraw-Hill StudySync Grades 6–12

Southfield Public Schools has adopted **McGraw-Hill StudySync** as the core ELA instructional program for **Grades 6–12**. StudySync is a complete, rigorous ELA curriculum designed to meet the needs of every learner. It uses a variety of complex, diverse texts to build language and comprehension skills through reading, writing, and research. Students receive dedicated ELA instruction each day.

READING & TEXT STUDY · DAILY

Engaging with Complex Texts

Standards-aligned literature and informational text study with embedded writing instruction. Students read across fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama — building the vocabulary and background knowledge expert readers rely on throughout their academic lives.

WRITING INSTRUCTION · DAILY

Writing to Learn and Communicate

Extended writing instruction guides students through planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. Self, peer, and teacher evaluations are embedded in every unit. MyAccess provides automated writing scoring and feedback throughout the writing process.

Grade 6 ELA Learning Priorities

READING LITERATURE & INFORMATIONAL (RL.6, RI.6)

- Cite textual evidence to support analysis of text (RL.6.1)
- Determine a theme or central idea; summarize (RL.6.2)
- Describe how plot unfolds; characters respond and change (RL.6.3)
- Determine figurative and connotative meanings of words (RL.6.4)
- Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (RL.6.9)
- Determine author's point of view or purpose (RI.6.6)
- Integrate information from multiple sources (RI.6.7)
- Evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text (RI.6.8)

WRITING & LANGUAGE (W.6, L.6)

- Write arguments with clear reasons and relevant evidence (W.6.1)
- Write informative/explanatory texts with organization (W.6.2)
- Write narratives with well-chosen details and sequenced events (W.6.3)
- Produce and strengthen writing through planning and revision (W.6.4–5)
- Conduct short research projects using multiple sources (W.6.7)
- Use correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling (L.6.1–2)
- Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary (L.6.3)
- Determine word meaning using context clues and word parts (L.6.4)

StudySync — What the Curriculum Includes

- Integrated reading and writing across fiction, nonfiction, poetry, drama, and informational texts
- Embedded skills lessons focusing on comprehension, reading, writing, and research
- Explicit vocabulary instruction, language acquisition, and reading comprehension strategies
- Equal access and opportunity for every student regardless of native language or proficiency level
- English Language Learner resources matched to the thematic focus, text structure, and writing form of each unit

- Extended writing instruction through the full writing process (plan → draft → revise → edit → publish)
- Self, peer, and teacher evaluations embedded in every unit lesson
- MyAccess automated writing scoring and real-time feedback for grades 4–12
- Learning Ally audiobook access for students with reading challenges

Instructional Resources

- McGraw-Hill StudySync (core curriculum, Grades 6–12)
- MyAccess — automated writing scoring and feedback, Grades 4–12
- IXL — targeted reading and language skills practice
- Learning Ally — human-read audiobooks for students with reading challenges
- HeyTutor — supplemental virtual tutoring support
- i-Ready — universal screening and diagnostic data
- A variety of novels, short stories, and informational texts

The Science of Reading in Practice

The **Science of Reading** refers to decades of research from cognitive science, linguistics, and education defining how the brain learns to read. StudySync (Grades 6–12) is built on this research, providing structured, evidence-based literacy instruction that works for all learners.

1

Phonological Awareness
Hear, blend, and segment sounds in spoken words

2

Phonics & Decoding
Map sounds to spellings systematically

3

Fluency
Read with accuracy, rate, and expression

4

Vocabulary
Build word knowledge through wide reading and discussion

5

Comprehension
Apply strategies to understand complex texts

STRUCTURED LITERACY IN EVERY CLASSROOM

Every StudySync lesson follows a consistent, evidence-based routine: close reading → vocabulary instruction → text-based discussion → structured writing response. This predictable structure supports all learners, including students with dyslexia or language differences. End-of-unit assessments guide differentiation and intervention at all grade levels, 6–12.

ELA Scope & Sequence Overview

Quarter	Unit / Theme	Key Texts & Genres	Writing Focus
Q1 Sep–Oct	Argumentative Writing & Informational Texts	Informational articles, speeches, essays; nonfiction excerpts	Argumentative essay with evidence and counterclaim
Q2 Nov–Jan	Literary Analysis & Fiction	Short stories, novel excerpts, poetry; diverse authors and cultures	Literary analysis; narrative writing with craft and structure
Q3 Jan–Mar	Informational Research & Media	News articles, multimedia sources, primary documents	Research report; informative/explanatory writing
Q4 Apr–Jun	Comparative Texts & Extended Writing	Cross-genre comparison; drama, poetry, and informational texts	Extended argument or research project; oral presentation

WRITING PROGRESSION: GRADES 5 → 6 → 7

Grade 5: Introduce a topic clearly; develop with facts and details; use precise language and transitions. | **Grade 6:** Introduce and develop a topic using definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; use transitions to clarify relationships; use precise, subject-specific vocabulary. | **Grade 7:** Preview topics clearly; support the information presented; use transitions to create cohesion across a more complex organizational structure.

Mathematics

● enVision Mathematics Grades K–8

Southfield uses **enVision Mathematics** for Grades K–8. The program combines problem-based learning with visual mathematical models. Each lesson opens with a *Solve & Share* task, followed by explicit instruction, guided practice, and assessment. enVision is fully aligned to the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics (CCSS-M).

OPERATIONS & ALGEBRAIC THINKING (6.EE)

- Write and evaluate numerical and algebraic expressions
- Solve one-variable equations and inequalities
- Represent and analyze relationships between variables
- Understand substitution in expressions and equations

THE NUMBER SYSTEM (6.NS)

- Divide fractions by fractions
- Multiply and divide multi-digit numbers and decimals
- Understand positive and negative rational numbers
- Order and absolute value on the number line

RATIOS & PROPORTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS (6.RP)

- Understand ratio concepts and use ratio reasoning
- Find unit rates; solve rate problems
- Use tables and double number lines for ratios
- Find percent of a quantity; solve percent problems

GEOMETRY & STATISTICS (6.G, 6.SP)

- Solve problems involving area, surface area, volume
- Represent statistical questions; understand variability
- Display data with dot plots, histograms, box plots
- Summarize data sets: measures of center and spread

Grade 6 Mathematics Scope & Sequence

Quarter	Months	Topic
Quarter 1	September – October	Topic 1: Use Positive Rational Numbers Topic 2: Integers and Rational Numbers
Quarter 2	November – January	Topic 3: Numeric and Algebraic Expressions Topic 4: Represent and Solve Equations and Inequalities
Quarter 3	January – March	Topic 5: Understand and Use Ratio and Rate Topic 6: Understand and Use Percent
Quarter 4	April – June	Topic 7: Solve Area, Surface Area, and Volume Problems Topic 8: Display, Describe, and Summarize Data

Instructional Resources

- enVision Mathematics 6–8 (core curriculum) — Pearson/SAVVAS
- IXL Mathematics Learning — intervention and skills practice
- BrainPOP — multimedia supplemental resource

Science

● SAVVAS Elevate Science Grades 6–8

Southfield has adopted **SAVVAS Elevate Science** for Grades 6–8. The program is fully aligned to the **Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)** and anchors every unit in a real-world phenomenon students investigate through hands-on activities, science and engineering practices, and cross-cutting concepts. Students develop scientific literacy alongside content knowledge.

THREE DIMENSIONS OF SCIENCE LEARNING (NGSS)		
Disciplinary Core Ideas	Science & Engineering Practices	Crosscutting Concepts
The key science concepts students need to know	How scientists investigate and engineers design	Ideas that apply across all science disciplines

Grade 6 Science Units

Unit & NGSS Standard	Phenomenon & Key Questions	Core Concepts
Unit 1: Structure and Properties of Matter MS-PS1-1, MS-PS1-2, MS-PS1-4	What makes one material different from another? Why do substances change state when heated or cooled?	Atomic composition; molecular models; physical and chemical properties; states of matter and particle motion
Unit 2: Energy Transfer MS-PS3-1 through MS-PS3-5	How does energy move from place to place? What happens to energy when objects interact?	Kinetic and potential energy; thermal energy transfer; engineering design to minimize or maximize heat transfer
Unit 3: Atoms and Chemical Reactions MS-PS1-1 through MS-PS1-6	How do substances change during chemical reactions? Where do new materials come from?	Atoms and the periodic table; chemical reactions; conservation of mass; synthetic materials from natural resources
Unit 4: Forces and Motion MS-PS2-1 through MS-PS2-5	What causes objects to move or change direction? How do fields exert forces at a distance?	Newton's Third Law; net force and mass; gravitational interactions; electric and magnetic forces
Unit 5: Waves and Information MS-PS4-1 through MS-PS4-3	How do waves transfer energy and information? Why are digital signals more reliable?	Wave amplitude and energy; reflection, absorption, and transmission; digitized vs. analog signals
Unit 6: Earth's Systems MS-ESS2-1 through MS-ESS2-3	How do Earth's materials cycle over time? What evidence shows Earth's surface changes?	Rock cycle and geosphere; plate tectonics; geoscience processes; history of Earth from rock strata

Instructional Resources

- Elevate Science Modules with Labs by Savvas (core curriculum, Grades 6–8)
- IXL — supplemental science skills practice
- BrainPOP — supplemental multimedia science resource

Social Studies

● McGraw Hill IMPACT Social Studies Grades K–12

Southfield uses **McGraw Hill IMPACT Social Studies** for Grades K–5, with a McGraw Hill / SAVVAS secondary sequence for Grades 6–12. In Sixth Grade, students study a geography-based course introducing the physical and human geography of the world. Students examine world civilizations of the Eastern Hemisphere, from Early Humankind through the development of major civilizations. IMPACT uses an inquiry-based approach anchored in compelling and supporting questions. Students investigate primary and secondary sources, construct arguments, and take informed action. The program integrates civics, economics, geography, and history in a cohesive, grade-level sequence.

GRADE 6 SOCIAL STUDIES — UNITS

Unit	Focus
Unit 1	World Geography — physical and human geography; five themes; map skills
Unit 2	Early Humankind & Neolithic Revolution — migration, agriculture, first settlements
Unit 3	Mesopotamia & Ancient Egypt — river civilizations; cuneiform; pyramids; hieroglyphics
Unit 4	Ancient India & China — geography's role; religion; governance systems
Unit 5	Ancient Greece & Rome — democracy; government; culture; legacy
Unit 6	Global Issues — research a global issue; persuasive writing; action plan

INQUIRY PROCESS (C3 FRAMEWORK)

- Construct compelling questions
- Gather and evaluate sources
- Develop claims with evidence
- Communicate and take action

KEY STANDARDS (MICHIGAN GLCE)

All units are aligned to Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations for Social Studies, covering civic values, geographic literacy, historical thinking, and economic reasoning at the Sixth Grade level.

FIVE THEMES OF GEOGRAPHY

- Location — where places are on Earth
- Place — physical and human characteristics
- Region — areas with common features
- Movement — migration, trade, ideas
- Human-Environment Interaction

Electives

Elective offerings at Southfield Public Schools depend on the individual school building. Sixth Grade students may have access to one or more of the following enrichment and specialty areas. Please contact your child's school directly for the specific elective schedule at your building.

WORLD LANGUAGE — SPANISH

Introduction to Spanish language and Latin American cultures. Students develop basic conversational vocabulary, practice listening and speaking skills, and explore cultural traditions through songs, games, and stories.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Gross motor skill development, spatial awareness, and cooperative play. Students participate in fitness activities, games, and movement challenges aligned to Michigan Health Education Standards, building habits of physical wellness.

VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS — FINE ARTS

Drawing, painting, sculpture, and design. Students develop visual literacy, explore elements and principles of art and design, and create original works reflecting personal expression and cultural understanding.

TECHNOLOGY & COMPUTER SCIENCE

Digital literacy, computational thinking, coding fundamentals, and responsible technology use. Students develop age-appropriate technology skills in alignment with ISTE Standards for Students.

VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS — MUSIC

Music literacy including rhythm, melody, harmony, and music from diverse cultural traditions. Students sing, play instruments, and explore musical concepts aligned to Michigan Visual and Performing Arts Standards.

NOTE TO FAMILIES

Elective schedules are determined at the building level and are subject to change. Contact your school's main office for the most current information about elective offerings and scheduling.

Social-Emotional Learning

Southfield Public Schools integrates social-emotional learning (SEL) throughout the school day. Sixth Grade students develop competencies aligned to the **CASEL framework**: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. SEL is embedded in daily routines, morning meetings, and subject-area instruction.

SIXTH GRADE SEL FOCUS AREAS

- Identifying and managing emotions in academic and social situations
- Building positive peer relationships and resolving conflicts constructively
- Practicing empathy, perspective-taking, and cultural awareness

INTEGRATION ACROSS SUBJECTS

StudySync Knowledge domains — including fiction that explores identity, nonfiction that examines civic issues, and informational texts on resilience and community — provide natural opportunities to discuss characters' decisions, emotions, and social challenges. Teachers intentionally connect SEL

- Developing a growth mindset toward learning challenges
- Understanding community responsibility and school norms

competencies to literature and content throughout the year.

Assessment & Reporting

Southfield Public Schools uses multiple forms of assessment to monitor student progress and guide instruction. Assessment data informs differentiation, intervention decisions, and communication with families.

Assessment Type	Program / Tool	Frequency	Purpose
ELA Unit Assessments	McGraw-Hill StudySync	End of each unit	Monitor reading comprehension and writing mastery; identify students needing support or enrichment
Writing Assessment	MyAccess / StudySync	Each unit extended write	Assess writing quality; provide automated feedback; inform re-teaching decisions
Math Unit Assessments	enVision Mathematics	End of each topic/unit	Measure mastery of CCSS-M standards; guide grouping and intervention
Science Performance Tasks	SAVVAS Elevate Science	End of each unit	Evaluate NGSS science and engineering practices through authentic tasks
Social Studies Assessments	McGraw Hill	End of each unit	Check understanding of civics, history, geography, and economics concepts
Progress Reports	Southfield SIS	4 times/year (quarterly)	Communicate student performance across all subject areas to families
Universal Screening	i-Ready / NWEA / DIBELS	3×/year (Sep, Jan, May)	Monitor reading and math growth; identify students for Tier 2/3 support
State Assessments	Michigan M-STEP / PSAT 8/9	Spring	Measure grade-level proficiency; results inform district curriculum decisions

EARLY LITERACY SCREENING & MTSS

In alignment with Michigan's Read by Third Grade Law, Southfield administers early literacy screeners to all students in Grades K–3. For Sixth Grade, universal screening data (i-Ready, NWEA, DIBELS) is used to identify students needing additional support. Students receive targeted Tier 2 or Tier 3 intervention through small-group instruction, supplemental tools, and progress monitoring every 2–4 weeks.

Family Partnership

Families are essential partners in student success. Here are meaningful ways to support your Sixth Grader at home:

SUPPORTING ELA (STUDYSYNC) AT HOME

- Read alongside your student — ask "What is the author's main argument?" or "How does this character change?"
- Encourage your student to share what they are writing about and give feedback as an audience
- Practice vocabulary words from current units in everyday conversation
- Support research projects by helping identify credible sources

SUPPORTING MATHEMATICS AT HOME

- Practice ratios and percentages using real-life examples (recipes, discounts, tips)
- Talk about positive and negative numbers using temperature, money, or elevation
- Use IXL for at-home skills practice in current math topics
- Ask your student to explain their homework — teaching reinforces understanding

SUPPORTING SCIENCE AT HOME

- Ask "Why does that happen?" about everyday science phenomena
- Connect school units to real life (weather, sound, materials, energy)
- Watch science documentaries and discuss the phenomena investigated
- Encourage questions — look up answers together using reliable sources

STAYING CONNECTED

- Review quarterly progress reports and reach out with questions
- Attend parent-teacher conferences in fall and spring
- Contact your child's teacher whenever you have concerns or want to celebrate successes
- Visit the Southfield Public Schools website for curriculum resources and family updates

CURRICULUM CONTACTS

For questions about Sixth Grade curriculum, instructional programs, or assessment, please contact the **Southfield Public Schools Office of Curriculum & Instruction**. Your child's classroom teacher is always your first point of contact for questions about your child's specific progress and learning.



Southfield Public Schools

Office of Curriculum & Instruction · Sixth Grade Curriculum Guide

Scholars Positioned for Success