

# SIXTH GRADE



Utah State  
Board of  
Education

Teaching  
and  
Learning

## Parent Guide to Student Success

Parents are important partners in achieving the Utah State Board of Education’s vision that “each student is prepared to succeed and lead by having knowledge and skills to learn, engage civically, and lead meaningful lives.” The purpose of this document is to help parents better understand what their children should learn, when a child may need more help or when a child would benefit from extra challenges. By using these resources, you may find more ways to advance your child’s learning at home while encouraging growth in their communication, critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

#### Essential Learning: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

- **Reading:** Sixth grade students can cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. They can determine the theme or main idea of a text and provide an objective summary.
- **Reading:** Sixth grade students can clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. They can determine the meaning of words, phrases, figurative language, connotative meanings and figures of speech.
- **Reading:** Sixth grade students can analyze how a sentence, paragraph, stanza, chapter, scene, or section fits into the overall structure and how it contributes to the development of theme, main idea, settings, or plot. (RL). Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and how it contributes to the development of the main idea.

## (Continued from Essential Learning: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS)

- **Writing:** Sixth grade students can compose argumentative, informative and narrative pieces where they introduce a topic or establish a situation, support the topic with evidence or build upon the situation, use linking words, phrases and clauses, and include a concluding section or resolution. They use appropriate conventions in their writing pieces.
- **Writing:** Sixth grade students can conduct short research projects to answer a question.
- **Speaking and Listening:** Sixth grade students can prepare for and participate effectively and orderly in a range of conversations, collaborations and civil discussions using grade-level appropriate vocabulary with peers on topics, texts and issues, building on others' ideas, qualifying or justifying responses with reasoning and elaboration, and expressing their own ideas clearly.
- **Speaking and Listening:** Sixth grade students can present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using relevant descriptions, facts and details to elaborate on main ideas or themes.

Link to the English Language Arts Core Standards:

[Link to the new ELA Standards coming soon!](#)

## Home-to-School Connections: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

- Talk with your child about what is in the news, or what is happening at school or your workplace.
- Have reading materials readily available around your home and encourage your child to read or play trivia games to engage them.
- Encourage good study habits, including goal setting and completing assignments on time. Encourage them to ask for help when needed.

## FINE ARTS

### Essential Learning: DANCE

- **Create:** Improvise simple choreography. Edit and fix the choreography.
- **Perform:** Perform the elements of dance (awareness of space, shapes, locomotor and non-locomotor movement, energy qualities and degrees, body parts, time).
- **Respond:** Identify movements when watching and doing. Use basic dance terminology to describe movement. Describe movement from a culture or genre. Describe why a dance is artistic.
- **Connect:** Identify emotions when watching a dance and connect it to personal life and personal views. Demonstrate movement of a specific topic. Find relationship between dance and culture, historical period, society or community. Connect to visual art. Connect to other core content.

## Essential Learning: DRAMA

- **Create:** Develop drama that answers who, what, when, where and why; develop character and mood; and resolve conflict.
- **Perform:** Analyze the character, setting and plot in a story; use choices to enhance drama performance.
- **Respond:** Recognize and share artistic choices when participating in or observing a drama work.
- **Connect:** Investigate common social issues, express them through a drama work and explain how drama connects oneself to one's community or culture.

## Essential Learning: MUSIC

- **Create:** Improvise rhythmic and melodic patterns connected to a specific purpose and context.
- **Perform:** Make interpretive decisions, with guidance, regarding the use of musical elements to express ideas and emotions.
- **Respond:** Identify music elements that are characteristic of different genres of music.
- **Connect:** Identify connections between a music genre and cultural or historical contexts.

## Essential Learning: VISUAL ARTS

- **Create:** Create art based on other cultures with detail, using materials and tools safely.
- **Present:** Learn about different cultures and their art.
- **Respond:** Evaluate artwork based on subject matter, use of media and the context it was created in.
- **Connect:** Analyze what materials were used to make different artworks. Consider the subject matter and message.

Link to the Utah **Fine Arts** Core Standards:

<https://www.schools.utah.gov/file/d1fde2c5-7463-4892-9d23-8584924537a7>

## Home-to-School Connections: FINE ARTS

- **Provide materials for children to create:**
  - Old clothes, hats and props for playmaking and movement exploration.
  - Simple musical instruments.
  - A stage area created by hanging old sheets or open space for dancing/playing.
  - Puppets and puppet stage.
  - Art materials to explore the art making process: crayons, markers, colored pencils, water with food coloring for watercolors, scrap paper, old magazines

## (Continued from Home-to-School Connections: FINE ARTS)

for making collages and/or cardboard from cereal boxes/paper towel rolls for sculpture, etc.

- An “art area” where messes are OK.

### ■ Use arts for parties and celebrations:

- Go to live arts, music, dance and drama performances.
- Have the children create and perform dance, drama or music performances.
- Sing simple songs together.
- Play drama games.
- Go to museums.
- Gather art supplies and make a mural.

### ■ Consider a variety of arts activities:

- Create simple melodies, write plays and dance pieces and perform them.
- Organize a children’s group or playdate to meet for arts activities or experiences.
- Take children to live dance, music and theatre productions.
- Make puppets out of materials around the house: sticks, pinecones, old socks, lunch sacks, etc.
- Make funny faces or sculptures out of food.

## HEALTH EDUCATION

### Essential Learning: HEALTH EDUCATION

#### ■ Health Foundations and Protective Factors of Healthy Self:

- Create a SMART goal and track the progress.
- Explain how personal values, differences, and beliefs contribute to personal boundaries and how personal boundaries are an important factor in making healthy decisions.

#### ■ Mental and Emotional Health: List warning signs of depression, anxiety and suicide and identify how, why and when talking with a trusted adult is needed. Discuss strategies to help self and others affected by mental and emotional health issues.

#### ■ Safety and Disease Prevention: Describe various ways the media can influence thoughts and feelings that may lead one to take unnecessary risks and develop strategies for minimizing risk (for example, dangerous activities, unsafe challenges, purchase choices, eating behaviors).

#### ■ Substance Abuse Prevention: Explain how the development of the frontal lobe impacts decision-making and how harmful substances affect development.

#### ■ Nutrition: Evaluate personal nutritional habits and physical activity levels and set goals. Recognize the importance of a healthy body image and develop appropriate food and exercise behaviors.

#### ■ Human Development:

- Describe the digestive, respiratory, and cardiovascular systems and their basic functions. Discuss how to clearly say no, leave a situation or interaction, and

## (Continued from Essential Learning: HEALTH EDUCATION)

identify and talk with a trusted adult when feeling uncomfortable, afraid or unsafe and the possible need to talk with more than one adult.

Link to the full Utah **Health Education** Core Standards:

<https://schools.utah.gov/file/ed906f78-eaf5-44fa-892f-984e28c4c2a7>

## Home-to-School Connections: HEALTH EDUCATION

- Discuss together the importance of seeking help for mental health concerns and when it is necessary seek help for others who having mental health issues, including suicide.
- Discuss your family values and expectations around substance use and consequences of decisions.
- Set goals to improve or maintain the health of each person in the family, including both nutrition and physical activity.
- Talk with your child about safe people such as parents, guardians, relatives, teachers, counselors or clergy and make a list of at least three specific people that your child could go to for help.

# MATHEMATICS EDUCATION

## Essential Learning: MATHEMATICS

- **STANDARDS FOR MATHEMATICAL PRACTICE** describe the mathematical habits of mind that teachers should seek to develop in their students. Students become mathematically proficient in engaging with mathematical content and concepts as they learn, experience, and apply these skills and attitudes.

Students will:

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
4. Model with mathematics.
5. Use appropriate tools strategically.
6. Attend to precision.
7. Look for and make use of structure.
8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

- **SIXTH GRADE STANDARDS FOR MATHEMATICS**

The Utah Core Standards for Mathematics describe the significant areas of learning and should be developed in tandem with the Standards for Mathematical Practice. These are the critical skills students will be learning in sixth grade to build their mathematical understanding.

Students will:

- Apply and use operations with rational numbers.
- Understand ratio concepts and apply proportional reasoning.

## (Continued from Essential Learning: MATHEMATICS)

- Simplify expressions and solve equations.
- Represent and analyze relationships.

Link to the Utah Core Standards for **Mathematics Middle/Junior High**

<https://www.schools.utah.gov/file/c18dee7b-338d-43a0-94f9-0960c9a5a9dd>

Major work of grade 6 Mathematics

<https://www.schools.utah.gov/file/a505401a-bef9-4ae4-9624-03c2a27beb68>

## Home-to-School Connections: MATHEMATICS

Families of Utah secondary mathematics student(s) are in a unique position to show the value and importance of deep mathematical thinking:

- Encourage your student to play mathematical puzzles and games.
- Encourage your student to take mathematical risks and find value in the learning process by honoring the logic in student(s) thinking even when the answer is incorrect.
- Encourage mathematical success through developing flexibility with numbers (number talks, asking in the moment mental mathematical questions: how much would this 20% discount be?).
- Allow your student to build his/her/their own mathematical identity by remaining neutral when mathematical topics come up in conversation.
- Encourage and model number sense and flexibility through everyday mathematical reasoning—use mental mathematics to figure out: the money you will save on a sale at a store, how long you can drive on a tank of gas during a road trip, how to efficiently double a recipe’s ingredients, talk about the mathematical representation of a thrown or kicked ball’s trajectory, etc.
- Encourage a growth mindset by understanding that all students have unlimited mathematical potential and that mathematical achievement involves working hard and taking risks.
- Understand that mathematical proficiency is more than fact fluency and recall, it includes five interwoven components: adaptive reasoning, strategic competence, conceptual understanding, productive disposition, and procedural fluency. (Kilpatrick, et. al, 2001)

Adapted from Advice for Parents

<https://www.youcubed.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Parent-Night-Handout-vF-1-2.pdf>

### References

Kilpatrick, J., Swafford, J., Findell, B., & National Research Council (U.S.). (2001). *Adding it up: Helping children learn mathematics*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

## Essential Learning: PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- **Motor Skills and Movement Patterns:** Demonstrate competency in movement skills to small group games such as basketball, volleyball, speedball and flag football. Demonstrate correct rhythm and patterns for a dance form.
- **Attain Efficient Movement and Performance:** Demonstrate strategies in a small group setting in both offensive and defensive situations to create or deny open space.
- **Components to Maintain Health and Fitness:** Design a fitness plan, including warm-up and cool-down, and analyze the impact of proper nutrition and hydration to physical activity, sports and personal health.
- **Develop Cooperative Skills:** Exhibit personal responsibility by using appropriate etiquette, demonstrate respect for facilities and equipment and exhibit safe behaviors. Identify and use appropriate strategies to reinforce positive fitness behaviors, such as positive self-talk.
- **Personal Value of Physical Activity:** Identify how physical activity reduces stress and promotes positive social interactions.

Link to the full Utah **Physical Education** Core Standards

<https://www.schools.utah.gov/file/6192280d-2ab2-4ff1-b5dd-a9c2f95c1b11>

## Home-to-School Connections: PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- Practice and play a variety of sports or physical activities together, including small group games.
- Plan a healthy meal, discuss the nutritional value and how the meal supports an active lifestyle.
- Stress the importance of using fitness equipment safely, showing respect for recreational facilities such as parks and playgrounds and reinforce positive fitness behaviors.
- Describe how physical activity has reduced personal stress and promoted healthy friendships.

# SCIENCE

## Essential Learning: SCIENCE

- **STRUCTURE AND MOTION WITHIN THE SOLAR SYSTEM:**
  - **Develop and use a model** of the sun-Earth-moon system to describe the cyclic patterns of lunar phases, eclipses of the sun and moon, and seasons.
  - **Develop and use a model** to describe the role of gravity and inertia in orbital motions of objects in our solar system.

## (Continued from Essential Learning: SCIENCE)

- **Use computational thinking to analyze data** and determine the scale and properties of objects in the solar system.
- **ENERGY AFFECTS MATTER:**
  - **Develop models** to show that molecules are made of different kinds, proportions, and quantities of atoms.
  - **Develop a model** to predict the effect of heat energy on states of matter and density.
  - **Plan and carry out an investigation** to determine the relationship between temperature, the amount of heat transferred, and the change of average particle motion in various types or amounts of matter.
  - **Design** an object, tool or process that minimizes or maximizes heat energy transfer.
- **EARTH'S WEATHER PATTERNS AND CLIMATE:**
  - **Develop a model** to describe how the cycling of water through Earth's systems is driven by energy from the sun, gravitational forces and density.
  - **Investigate** the interactions between air masses that cause changes in weather conditions.
  - **Develop and use a model** to show how unequal heating of the Earth's systems causes patterns of atmospheric and oceanic circulation that determine regional climates.
  - **Construct an explanation supported by evidence** for the role of the natural greenhouse effect in Earth's energy balance, and how it enables life to exist on Earth.
- **STABILITY AND CHANGE IN ECOSYSTEMS:**
  - **Analyze data** to provide evidence for the effects of resource availability on organisms and populations in an ecosystem. Ask questions to predict how changes in resource availability affects organisms in those ecosystems.
  - **Construct an explanation** that predicts patterns of interactions among organisms across multiple ecosystems.
  - **Develop a model** to describe the cycling of matter and flow of energy among living and nonliving parts of an ecosystem.
  - **Construct an argument** supported by evidence that the stability of populations is affected by changes to an ecosystem.
  - **Evaluate competing design solutions** for preserving ecosystem services that protect resources and biodiversity based on how well the solutions maintain stability within the ecosystem.

Link to the full **Utah Science with Engineering Education (SEEd)** Core Standards  
<https://www.schools.utah.gov/file/907086b7-f433-42e5-83e0-2ffd746f7fcb>

## Home-to-School Connections: SCIENCE

- Observe and record what the moon looks like for a month. What patterns are you noticing? Using objects to represent the Earth, moon and sun, develop a model that describes these changes?
- Investigate what happens to the shape of an ice cube and a chocolate bar as they

**(Continued from Home-to-School Connections: SCIENCE)**

are heated by the sun. Using paper and a pencil, develop a model that predicts why these changes occur.

- Watch a weather forecast. How does the meteorologist describe the movement of different air masses? How does this predicted movement affect the forecasted weather?
- Research different interactions among organisms such as competition, predation, and mutualism. Where do you see examples of these relationships in organisms in your neighborhood?

## **SOCIAL STUDIES**

### **Essential Learning: SOCIAL STUDIES**

The social studies parent guides will be coming as soon as those new standards have been approved by the Board.

### **PARTNER WITH YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER(S)**

Productive relationships between parents and teachers are essential to learning. You can facilitate development of a respectful relationship with your child's teacher(s) by:

- Introducing yourself.
- Asking about the best means to communicate effectively regarding your child's learning (for example: email, notes, phone calls).
- Sharing anything that would be important to consider when planning for your child's learning experiences (for example: strengths, areas for growth, goals and/or any other special considerations).
- Attending parent teacher conferences and identifying ways you can support your child's development, growth and learning.
- Asking your child about what they are learning and reinforcing their learning at home by maintaining focus on the learning process rather than outcomes and celebrating both successes and failures.
- Acknowledging the positive contributions of educators on your child's development, growth and learning.

(Continued)

## **5Es FOR FAMILIES**

To support your child in developing the characteristics found in [Utah's Portrait of a Graduate](#), you will find [Utah's 5Es for Families](#) to be another helpful resource. By using the 5Es for Families, your home environment can support and enrich your child's learning.