



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS



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PARENT CURRICULUM GUIDE



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GRADE

6



How to Use the Parent Curriculum Guide:

This guide gives you the tools you need to support your child at home. In this booklet, you'll find strategies based on the DCPS curriculum to help your child meet his or her learning goals. You'll have a better understanding of what your child is learning in school and how you can further learning at home.

What You Can Do:

You play a very important role in your child's academic performance. Here are some things you can do to support learning at home:

- ▶ Let your child know that education is the foundation for success.
- ▶ Know what your child is expected to learn in the 6th grade.
- ▶ Help your child set high short-term and long-term academic goals.
- ▶ Provide a designated time and location to complete homework.
- ▶ Talk to your child about what is happening in school and constantly monitor progress.
- ▶ Advocate for your child.
- ▶ Share your child's strengths with your child's teacher.

Questions to Ask Your Child's Teacher:

When speaking with your child's teacher about academic progress, here are a few questions you may want to consider asking:





















- ▶ What are the learning goals? Can you show me examples of student work that meets the learning goals?
- ▶ May I see an example of my child's work? How does it or doesn't it meet these learning goals?
- ▶ Is my child at or above grade level, what extra support is available? What can I do at home?
- ▶ What classroom routines do you have that should also be used at home?
- ▶ What kinds of questions could I ask my child on a daily basis about your class?

Talking to Your Child:

Good conversations help our children see that we are interested in their lives. Here are a few conversation starters you may want to consider asking

- ▶ Tell me about the best part of your day.
- ▶ What was the hardest thing you had to do today?
- ▶ Can you show me something you learned today?
- ▶ What books are you reading in school? Describe your favorite character? Why do you like that character?
- ▶ What do you think you should do more of at school? What do you think you should do less of? Why?

WHAT MY SIXTH GRADER IS LEARNING

	ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 	MATH 	SCIENCE 	SOCIAL STUDIES 
<p>FALL</p> 	<p>Students will read the novel <i>Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry</i> by Mildred D. Taylor, as a coming of age story, an evaluation of courage and navigating systemic injustice, and as a critique of race relations in the American South during the Great Depression.</p> <p>• • •</p> <p>Students will consider the challenges facing children as they grow up, whether growing up has gotten easier over time, and what still needs to be done to improve upon these challenges.</p> 	<p>“Students will understand ratio concepts and use ratio reasoning to solve problems. Students will apply and extend previous understandings of multiplication and division to divide fractions by fractions. Students will compute fluently with multi-digit numbers and find common factors and multiples.”</p> <p>• • •</p> <p>Students will apply and extend previous understandings of numbers to the system of rational numbers.</p> 	<p>Students take on the role of student planetary geologists as they investigate a mysterious channel photographed on Mars’ surface.</p> <p>• • •</p> <p>Students play the role of geologists working for the fictional Museum of West Namibia to investigate Mesosaurus fossils found both in southern Africa and in South America. They learn that the surface of the Earth has changed dramatically over the Earth’s history, with continents and ocean basins changing shape and arrangement due to the motion of tectonic plates. As the Earth’s surface changes, fossils that formed together may be split apart.</p> 	<p>How do we know where we are? By examining the characteristics of nearby and far away areas, students learn that geography affects the development of cultures, political structures, and social structures.</p> <p>• • •</p> <p>What value do we see in Africa? By analyzing Africa’s diverse landscape, cultural geography, and languages, students learn not to discuss a generalized “single” Africa, and trace the African diaspora and contributions of people of African descent around the globe.</p> <p>• • •</p> <p>How can culture create a region? Students explore the three major Abrahamic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and compare their beliefs and behaviors.</p> 
<p>WINTER</p> 	<p>“The fountain of youth is a trope that captures the imaginations of human beings. In this unit, students will read a novel that allows them to ponder the implications of eternal life from the point of view of a young girl who has not yet come of age. They will consider what it means to grow up and whether or not they would press the pause button if given the chance. Additionally, students will consider the challenges facing children as they grow up, whether growing up has gotten easier over time, and what still needs to be done to improve upon these challenges.</p> <p>• • •</p> <p>As a part of this unit, students will read several poems that focus on children’s experiences growing up. These poems represent a diverse set of child voices and experiences. Each poem presents an opportunity to practice using academic language used to analyze poetry and a chance to discuss social issues that children struggle with every day.”</p> 	<p>“Students will apply and extend previous understandings of arithmetic to algebraic expressions. Students will reason about and solve one-variable equations and inequalities. Students will represent and analyze quantitative relationships between dependent and independent variables. Students will solve real-world and mathematical problems involving area, surface area, and volume.”</p> 	<p>Taking on the role of geologists, students investigate a geologic puzzle: two rock samples, one from the Great Plains and one from the Rocky Mountains, look very different but are composed of a surprisingly similar mix of minerals. Did the rocks form together and somehow get split apart? Or did one rock form first, and then the other rock form from the materials of the first rock? To solve the mystery, students learn about how rock forms and transforms, driven by different energy sources.</p> <p>• • •</p> <p>Students act as student climatologists helping a group of farmers near Christchurch, New Zealand figure out the cause of significantly colder air temperatures in New Zealand during the El Niño climate event. To solve the puzzle, students investigate what causes regional climates. They learn about energy from the sun and energy transfer between Earth’s surface and atmosphere, ocean currents, and prevailing winds.</p> 	<p>Who is responsible for educating every child? Students investigate how geography impacts a child’s access the education in South Asia.</p> <p>• • •</p> <p>Should the government or markets control the economy? Students investigate the physical and human geography of Europe and analyze the major economic systems that were and are used in Europe to distribute resources.</p> 
<p>SPRING</p> 	<p>Students dig deep into the immigration experience that is foundational to the United States of America. The learning experiences they will undertake will require them to think critically about immigration as both a universal human experience and as a policy issue that affects millions of families every day. Students will read fiction and non-fiction stories about immigrants whose lives are changed upon arriving to this country and craft arguments regarding the state of immigration policy today. Students will read and write poetry about the immigrant experience while learning about the poetic devices and figurative language that poets use to increase the emotional impact of their poems. They will develop the speaking and listening skills necessary to express their opinions logically, using the appropriate details and facts required to defend those opinions. Students will use evidence from recent news stories about the immigrant experience to defend their arguments, both written and spoken.</p> 	<p>“Students will develop understanding of statistical variability and summarize and describe distributions.”</p> 	<p>Students play the role of student forensic meteorologists as they discover how water vapor, temperature, energy transfer, and wind influence local weather patterns in a fictional town called Galetown.</p> <p>• • •</p> <p>Students investigate what is causing ice on Earth’s surface to melt in order to help the fictional World Climate Institute educate the public about the processes involved. Students consider claims about changes to energy from the sun, to the atmosphere, to Earth’s surface, or in human activities as contributing to climate change.</p> 	<p>What does America mean? Students explore regions within the Americas, and analyze how African, European, and indigenous cultures influenced culture in the Americas today.</p> <p>• • •</p> <p>Can people make a difference in the health of their city? Students engage in regional study of East Asia and investigate the causes & effects of rapid global population growth over the past two centuries.</p> <p>• • •</p> <p>What do countries owe each other? Students investigate the causes and impacts of natural disasters, and how citizens of the world respond to these crises.</p> 

ACTIVITIES TO PRACTICE WITH MY SIXTH GRADER



Read together everyday for 20 minutes.

FALL



Keep a journal recording how much time you spend reading each day! List your favorite characters from each story and identify a place in the story where the character shows a quality that you admire.

Consider asking your child to interview older adults in the community to learn about their experiences growing up. Ask your child to compare and contrast their life with the life of the person being interviewed.



Calculate prices while shopping - Consider asking your child "how much will these items cost together? How much change will I receive? How much will each person pay if we split the bill evenly?"

Use ratio language to describe people and items while out and about (i.e. The ratio of Washington Football Team fans to cowboys fans is 5 to 3)

Ask your child to calculate the unit price of different sized cereals to determine the better deal - (i.e. Is a 21.7 oz box of Fruit Loops for \$3.84 a better deal than a 12.2 oz box of Fruit Loops for \$2.75? Why?)



Take your child on a visit to the Albert Einstein Planetarium at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum.

Take your child on a visit to the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History's Hall of Fossils exhibit and journey through time from the beginning of life on Earth through the reign of the dinosaurs to the present, a time of immense planetary changes.



Take a walk around your community with your child and help them identify local resources to display on their Community Profile Map. Practice reading maps (on the metro, on a GPS/Google Maps, etc.) during your commute with your child.

Ask your child about what they've learned about the diversity of different countries and regions within Africa.

Watch the New York Times video clip [bit.ly/DCPSNYT](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/27/us/politics/dc-politics.html) from the curriculum together, and engage in a discussion around the probing questions from the curriculum.



Visit the National Zoo! Record observations (like color, shape, and size) of your five favorite animals. Keep your observations as objective as possible. For example, "The lion is tan and strong."

Plan a trip to the National Mall! Explore the history of one of the monuments or memorials. Discuss what the monument means to you.



WINTER



Work with your child to their personal identities and the qualities that make them unique, heritage being a part of one's identity.



Ask your child to continue visual patterns and to figure out how many objects will be in the 43rd pattern. See if they can create an equation to determine how many objects will be in any step of the pattern. See: bit.ly/VisualPatterns

Imagine what the wrapping paper would look like for different 3D objects if there was no overlap when wrapping the paper.



Take your child on a visit to the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History's Hall of Geology, Gems, and Minerals to learn the secrets of Earth's gems, minerals, rocks, earthquakes, and volcanoes.



Continue reading the book "I am Malala" together by loaning it from your neighborhood library or watch the documentary "He Named Me Malala" on Amazon Prime.

Discuss with your child an article or video about a current event that shows how countries work together, through the EU or NATO (for example, Brexit).



Speed up your typing skills with the fun games and activities at bit.ly/TypingFun. Can you win all of the games?!



SPRING



Watch a movie based on legends and mythical characters. Ask your child to explain how the characters are portrayed differently in the books than the movie.



Identify shapes in everyday life and discuss how to decompose shapes into rectangles and triangles.

Ask your child to engage with the data in every day media (newspapers, TV, social media, etc.). Discuss whether the display is the best for the data shown, what the data suggests, how to summarize the data or describe the shape of the data.



Include your child in your plans for summer vacation. Think about the places you might go, and do research together about the weather and climate in the place you want to visit. What kinds of extreme weather might you have to avoid or prepare for if you decide to visit?



Practice sourcing the origins of items in daily life, such as clothing, cars, and food, to help your child understand where things come from all around the world. Discuss how countries cooperate to make a finished product.

Ask your child to share their action plan for improving DC and engage in a discussion around how city living can change over time.

The SAGE post-test takes place in June. Encourage your child to do their best.



Visit the Kenilworth Park and Aquatic Gardens. Take a pond tour on weekends at 10 a.m to look for frogs. Visit nps.gov/keaq for more information.

