

Sonoran Sky Elementary School

Curriculum Highlights

Sixth Grade

Theme: *Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*

Sixth grade is a year of great transition and growth. Many changes begin to take place as the students emerge and discover their own strengths. To guide them through the change from elementary to middle school, Sonoran Sky emphasizes: leadership skills and opportunities to get involved; the need for positive role models; the importance of active involvement as a model citizen, and the process of setting goals.

To better prepare the students for seventh grade, they rotate to each of the sixth grade teachers for science, social studies and language. Sixth graders are also motivated and challenged to become responsible students and members of society. Since leadership is key this year, students participate in numerous leadership activities that help prepare them for the future.

Cooperative learning is also evident in all areas of sixth grade instruction. Students are taught **art, music, physical education** and **media/technology** by teachers certified in those areas. Additionally, the comprehensive curriculum includes:

Reading

The district's adopted Harcourt Storytown Reading Program has been introduced to the sixth graders and is supplemented with selections from our past. Through the Literature and Language series and the use of the Specific Skills Program students work intensely on basic skill areas such as inferencing, sequencing, drawing conclusions, and using context clues. Students will also be reading various chapter books that compliment our social studies curriculum. Vocabulary will be emphasized as well as developing creative thinking skills, predicting and paraphrasing. In addition, students participate in the school-wide "Accelerated Reading Program" which allows them to challenge themselves with reading leveled books.

Spelling

Sonoran Sky utilizes the Harcourt Storytown Spelling Program in which students will be assessed on 20 words per week. Each lesson incorporates words that are grouped according to spelling patterns or themes. Students are asked to complete a preview on Monday and review test will be given on Friday. Supplementary mini-lessons are taught when needed to reinforce intermediate-level phonetic development.

Language

Students will be instructed in the areas of grammar and all phases of writing. Emphasis is placed on the parts of speech, and these will be carried over into their writing. Through the use of the writing process, students develop and publish through the *Six Traits*. In addition, students will be instructed on how to develop an appropriate format for writing single or multi-paragraph essays. Students will publish an informal report through their Lyrical Voices project.

Math

We use the district adopted Glencoe 6-8 math program. It offers a clean transition from 6th grade math to the middle school math. Students will maintain a math journal that becomes a "working journal" and all concepts, examples and vocabulary will be maintained there. Students are expected to take this home on a regular basis and to use their journal as a resource aid. Students also participate in the Arithmetic Daily Dose receiving additional practice of basic skills and problem solving.

Continued on Page 2

Social Studies

The “World” is our 6th grade focus, and students will be introduced to the past in a variety of ways. Areas of study include: Mesopotamia, Egypt, China, India, Greece, and Italy. Everyday hands-on activities helps to promote interest and understanding. As a culminating activity to the studies of ancient Greece, students will participate in their own "Greek Olympics".

Science

Our science program will focus on student learning of the Scientific Method and science inquiry. They will receive instruction in the fields of life, earth, and physical science. Students will be immersed in experiments that will allow them to think like a scientist and to make predictions and conclusions on their own. They work in a team to study a natural disaster to create a multimedia presentation. They participate in a simulation, Code Blue, focusing on the systems of the human body. To complete the year, each student designs and conducts an experiment then publishes their findings in the sixth grade science fair.

Homework

Sixth graders are expected to have an average of one hour of homework per night. Some nights there may be less, and some nights there may be more. Because we want to teach the students responsibility and better prepare them for seventh grade, late work will affect a student’s study skill areas.

Special Programs/Projects

Sixth graders have many hands-on activities to enhance their learning opportunities and leadership skills throughout the school year.

P.I.L.O.T.S.

Preparing Individual Leadership Opportunities to Succeed was developed by sixth grade teachers and encompasses curriculum based on the Character Counts and Get Real About Violence programs. Students and parents work through activities promoting team building and group interaction. Students attend workshops designed to encourage listening skills, communication skills, self-acceptance, and responsibility, all of which are vital in leadership. P.I.L.O.T.S. training is held at Chapel Rock in Prescott, AZ. Should the student complete the program successfully, they will become a participant in a celebration, a culmination, event at the end of the school year. As a sixth grade leader at Sonoran Sky, students serve on one of three committees. These committees meet on Thursdays. A major component of these committees is to allow students the opportunity to extend their leadership in the school community. Each will be expected to complete several curriculum based activities as well as outside community service.

Human Growth & Development

This program, facilitated by the Sonoran Sky nurse and Physical Education teacher, covers six different lessons. Each of the lessons focuses on the development of the human body as it progresses through puberty and into adulthood.

Artist-in-Residence

Sixth grade students participate in this residency with employed actors of Childsplay. Each student is directed on how to create characters and stories using a variety of techniques. Students often write and create a culmination activity presented to the sixth grade families at the culmination of the residency .