

6th Grade Earth Science Syllabus

Thurgood Marshall Middle School
Spring Semester 2015

Mrs. Betty Wilkinson
858.549.5400 Ext 80308 2326#

Room C206
bwilkinson@sandi.net

Website for assignments and grades: <http://elearning.sandi.net/course/view.php?id=413>

- Use the student's Active Directory ID and password to enter the website.
- Select the **Gradebook** topic under the **Administration** heading on the left column of the website (found under the calendar).

Course Description: This is a one-semester science course that teaches earth science concepts and laboratory skills. Students complete activities and projects that emphasize how science is used to solve problems and answer questions. Students will collect and analyze data, create models, ask questions and make decisions based on evidence. A hands-on, project-based approach is used for the students to gain skills in the content area and to develop ways to communicate their learning to others. The standards for this course can be found at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ca/sc/ngssstandards.asp>.

This course is divided into six units, each focused around a different area of earth science and a life skills unit. The units are:

- Unit A – What is Thermal Energy? (Heat)
- Unit B – Plate Tectonics and the Earth's Structure
- Unit C – Shaping the Earth's Surface
- Unit D – Energy in the Earth System
- Unit F – Ecology
- Life Skills Unit

Additionally earth science current events topics will be added throughout the school year.

Course Objectives:

1. Achieve mastery of the standards for 6th grade in the areas of earth science and basic physical science as applied in the earth science content.
2. Develop skills in observing, collecting, organizing, and communicating scientific data and information.
3. Practice problem-solving, creative and critical thinking with earth science topics.
4. Use computers and the Internet for research and to create documents and projects to showcase learning.
5. To nurture the viewpoint that science is an interesting and important discipline.
6. To prepare students for science in the higher grades.

Course Objectives: Student Behavior

1. Actively participate in class discussions and group work.
2. Use questioning as a means of learning.
3. Follow given guidelines when using the computer and lab equipment (glassware, thermometers, balances, and other lab tools).
4. Follow all lab safety rules and instructions for cleanup after a lab activity.
5. Respect all class procedures and take turns with other students as time allows.

6. Complete 20 minutes of science homework 2-3 times a week.
7. Exhibit good citizenship to help maintain an excellent learning environment in the classroom.

Textbooks: Science: Focus on Earth Science (Prentice Hall) and Science and Life Issues, Lawrence Hall of Science, University of California and Berkley (website: www.sepuplhs.org) texts are used in the classroom. A copy of the Focus on Earth ``Science textbook will be checked out to each student for homework assignments and study for tests.

Homework: Homework will be assigned 2-3 times a week. To receive credit, homework must be ready to turn in on the due date at the beginning of the period or be posted on the elearning class website prior to the start of class.

Late homework will receive a maximum of 70% credit and may be turned in up to one week late.

Parents are asked to be aware of homework assignments, monitor the progress towards its completion and contact the teacher if assignments are at a difficulty level that the students are frustrated.

Homework assignments with due dates and explanations, will be posted on the Marshall website (**www.marshallmiddle.org**). Additionally, a summary of the class agenda and assignment details with due dates will be posted on the class website (**elearning.sandi.net**) .

Please note: I realize that emergencies will occur. Students who speak to me privately, email me, or bring a note from their parents (at lunch or after school) will be considered on a case-by-case basis for a one time dropped grade (which will not lower the student's homework average). In any case, discussion of missing homework should in no way take class time away from learning. A long-term major project cannot be a dropped assignment.

After School Sessions for Homework/Projects/Computer Time:

- Room C206: Any afternoon from 2:20 to 2:35
- Individually scheduled appointment times as needed

Also check the Homework Zone and Media Center schedule for individual work times for research and computer projects.

Make-Up Work Due to Absences: Late classwork or homework will be accepted in the case of an excused absence. The number of days of the absence is the number of days the student will have to make up the work, including tests and projects.

Students who have been absent may take a quiz or unit test after school or during the next class block day.

Assessments: Quizzes and tests will be given after students have been given notice to study the topics covered by the assessment. Homework and classwork quizzes will be given only after the assignments have been discussed and students have had time to have their questions answered in class. Some assessments will be give open-note or open-discussion with cooperative learning groups to give students practice in taking objective science tests.

Grading Policy:

A=90% - 100% B=80% - 89% C=70% - 79% D=60% - 69% F=Below 60%

30% of grade based on assessments:

- Chapter and Unit Tests
- Laboratory Quizzes
- Classwork/Video Quizzes

70% of grade based on assignments:

- Homework
- Classwork and Projects
- Class participation
- Journal entries

Online Grade Reporting:

- Grading will be an ongoing process and the students and parents will have access to grades at all times (website will be available later in September or October).
- A dash or blank by an assignment means that the assignment has been turned in on time but the assignment has not been graded by the teacher or the grade is part of the weekly class participation grade.
- If an assignment has not been turned in and it is past the due date, a zero will appear as the grade. Talk to the teacher about making up zero grades by working after school on Tuesdays.

Classroom Rules/Policies:

1. Follow directions the first time given
2. Be prepared for class
3. Follow accountable talk rules for class discussions
4. Stay seated
5. No putdowns or inappropriate language
6. During group time, speak quietly with your team members only
7. Show respect at all times

Consequences for Breaking Classroom Rules:

1st time – Verbal warning.

2nd time – Verbal warning and lowering of class participation and citizenship grade.

3rd time – One-half to one page essay describing the rule broken and how school and classroom goals are being hindered by that behavior. This essay is due the next school day and the student's citizenship grade is lowered to an N until the essay is turned in. Parent contact will be made about the situation. Class participation for the week is recorded as a 60% (needs improvement).

4th time – Phone call home and 30 minutes after school.

5th time – Parent conference and referral to counselor or assistant principal.

Note: The teacher will contact parents at any time there is a major concern about the student's work or behavior. At the end of each week, students will be given a grade for their participation in class that week. Weekly seating charts will be used to record both positive and negative behavior so that a fair citizenship grade can be given at the end of the six weeks.

Tardiness:

Number of Tardies	Consequences
1st Tardy	Warning
2nd Tardy	Note home to parents to be returned with a parent signature. Maximum 6-week citizenship grade is a G
3rd Tardy	Note home to parents to be returned with parent signature
4th Tardy	Administration will review the situation and assign consequences Maximum 6-week citizenship grade is an S
5th Tardy	Consequences assigned by administration Maximum 6-week citizenship grade is a N
6th Tardy	Consequences assigned by administration Automatic U in citizenship for six weeks

Suggested Supplies: Students are asked to have materials for learning ready for class when the bell rings so that instructional time will not be shortened or interrupted by borrowing supplies.

Suggested materials:

- 2 pencils with an eraser (or a mechanical pencil with an eraser)
- 1 subject spiral notebook, college ruled
- Coloring pencils
- Ear bud/small headphones
- Glue stick

Guidelines for Citizenship Grades:

Note: Students begin the grading period with a "Satisfactory" and must earn a "G" or "E".

Students who show any of the following behaviors are at risk of receiving the U (unsatisfactory) mark on their progress report.

- Uncooperative or disruptive behavior for a substitute teacher
- Stealing/damaging of personal items or school materials
- Cheating or sharing of answers on a test
- Copying homework or classwork

Students who show any of the following behaviors are at risk of receiving on their progress report an N (needs improvement) or U (for repetitive and excessive behaviors).

- Using class time to argue about late homework or to argue about a class issue
- Off topic discussion during presentations or group time
- Talking while assignments are being given or during individual assignments
- Lack of respect shown towards fellow students or classroom procedures and materials
- Loud talking or any disruption that hinders the learning of others
- Stopping classwork early and waiting to leave prior to the dismissal bell
- Gum or food in the classroom

To receive a G (good) in citizenship, the following guidelines are given:

- Be in your chair when the bell rings with supplies ready for class
- Have homework in the proper form and ready to discuss or turn in when the bell rings
- Be honest and take responsibility for late or missing homework
- Look on the board for the day's classwork and homework
- Be alert to answering questions during class discussion
- Follow directions and give attention to the corrections of papers – do not talk to the owner of the paper during group corrections; be honest during self-correction.
- Do not interrupt or raise your hand while someone else is speaking
- Go to the classroom supply areas (to get Kleenex, etc.) as needed without disrupting class or asking permission
- Use the classroom pass and sign out to go to the restroom only when direct instruction is not being given. In case of an emergency need, notify the teacher immediately and you will be excused.
- Ask the teacher questions when you do not understand a concept or instructions
- Use all class time for learning purposes without disturbing other students
- Be an active participant at your table group
- Be efficient with class time when in groups.
- Neatly put away all classroom materials used
- Leave your desk clean and in its proper place.

To receive an E (excellent) in citizenship, the following guidelines are given:

- Show all of the behaviors described in the G section.
- Complete all assignments, including homework, on time.
- Always have your homework and supplies on your desk immediately after the bell rings.
- Be helpful in maintaining class discussions, both in table groups and whole-class situations
- Help keep the classroom organized and tidy and volunteer to be helpful
- Lead table discussions both in asking and answering questions.
- Be a classroom monitor, peer tutor or paper-grader
- Actively participate in all assignments.
- Be a team player with a good attitude and assist in making the classroom a pleasant place to be
- Use class time wisely if you finish an assignment early
- Show a positive, respectful attitude at all times

Rewards for Following Rules:

- Increased participation/citizenship grade (weekly and each six weeks)
- Praise and positive notes, calls or emails home
- Free homework pass (randomly)
- Free choice seating for a group activity
- Edible treats (randomly)



Welcome to 6th Grade Earth Science

January 30, 2015

Dear Parents,

Middle school students are my favorite! Your son or daughter will take part in fun and engaging projects and learn amazing science facts this semester. I will encourage my students to take science discussions home to share with you. Hopefully you will enjoy hearing about Landsat, Curiosity, solar eclipses on Mars, the frozen fossil Lyuba, extinct volcanoes, continental drift, hot spots, endangered species, the Tasman Sea and fracking this semester.

Have you read the syllabus for this class and discussed it with your student? If not, please take the time to do so as soon as possible.

In addition to the syllabus, I would like you to have access to the web site for our class:

<http://elearning.sandi.net/course/view.php?id=413>

Please ask your son or daughter to help you access it and show you how to view where their science grades will be posted. Please acknowledge on the return form that you know how to access this grade.

I would like to know any specific needs that your child may have for this class and/or any background information you would like to provide me so I can get to know your student. I will use the input you give me in planning lessons and for individualizing instruction to best meet your student's needs. Please fill in the comment form on the back of the syllabus return form or send me an e-mail with this information.

I am looking forward to meeting you at **Spring Open House on Wednesday March 26 from 3 – 6 pm**. Currently Mrs. Mitzi Richardson (mrichardson2@sandi.net) is the substitute teacher for this class as I am home recovering from surgery.

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns at anytime during the school year. I am looking forward to a great spring semester with my students!

Respectfully,

Betty Wilkinson, MEd
Science/Math/Computer Teacher

858.549.5400 ext 80308-2326#
bwilkinson@sandi.net

How to log in to the 6th Grade Earth Science webpage:

- Go to <https://elearning.sandi.net/login/index.php>
- Use the username and password given to your student in class.

Student Name (Printed) _____ Class Period _____

6th Grade Earth Science

Spring Semester 2015

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For Parents:

_____ I have read the policies and procedures in the syllabus for this science class.

_____ I have seen the grades and assignments that are posted on the moodle website.

Moodle login for class website <https://elearning.sandi.net/login/index.php>

_____ I have signed up to receive an e-mail notification every day at 5 pm. (Optional)

Automated homework notifications for parents and students

<http://marshallmiddle.org/apps/account/other/?rn=7069045>

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

For Students:

_____ I have read the policies and procedures in this syllabus for my science class.

_____ I have seen the grades that are posted on the moodle website.

Moodle login for class website <https://elearning.sandi.net/login/index.php>

_____ I have signed up to receive an e-mail notification every day at 5 pm.

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Student Signature _____ Date _____

6th Grade Earth Science

Spring Semester 2015

If you have input concerning your child, questions, comments or concerns, please include them below. If you prefer, send your comments by e-mail or contact me for a conferencetime.

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