

Welcome to 6th grade!

2017-2018

Curriculum Guide & Handbook

Mrs. Van Singel, Mrs. Lillibridge, & Mr. Ottenbaker

UNITY

I dreamed I stood in a studio
And watched two sculptors there,
The clay they used was a young child's mind
And they fashioned it with care.

One was a teacher:
The tools she used were books and music and art;
One was a parent:
With a guiding hand and a gentle, loving heart.

And when at last their work was done,
They were proud of what they had wrought.
For the things they had worked into the child
Could never be sold or bought!

And each agreed they would have failed
If they had worked alone.

For behind the parent stood the school,
And behind the teacher stood the home!

-Ray A. Lingenfelter

www.6thgradestories.weebly.com

kvansingel@westmichiganacademy.org - Ext. 304

jillibridge@westmichiganacademy.org - Ext. 303

dottenbaker@westmichiganacademy.org - Ext. 401

616-844-9961



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Academy Welcome

Autobiographies

Arts at WMAAA

Classroom Management Plan

Our Classroom Curriculum

Homework Policy

Grading Scale

Communication

Planner

Other

A General Welcome from the Academy Staff

We are delighted that you care enough about your child's education to be using your right to personally select your child's school program and have selected WMAAA to be that school. The staff and families of the West Michigan Academy of Arts and Academics welcome you to our community. We hope you and your student have a truly wonderful and satisfying year.

Because we believe that students learn in different ways at different times; that students learn best when they are actively engaged in their own learning and when they apply their learning to real life situations; that the arts nurture the acceptance of diversity; and that exposure to the arts is essential to the development of each child, we have focused our academy's mission.

WMAAA Mission Statement

Empowering students to reach their ultimate personal success through the unique integration of Arts and Academics.

WMAAA Student Pledge

Today, I will do my personal best.

I will only give encouragement,
and not put-downs.

I will be trustworthy, truthful, and an active listener.

About Us

Mrs. Van Singel

Mrs. Van Singel graduated from Grand Valley State University with a major in Language Arts and Elementary Education emphasis. Mrs. Van Singel considers herself a lifelong learner, who enjoys sparking curiosity and critical thinking in others. Teaching is her passion, and she's very excited to be teaching 6th graders! She also enjoys spending time with her husband, Nick, and their two children, Alexis and Charlie. While her family keeps her very busy, Mrs. Van Singel enjoys running long distances, hiking, and simply being outdoors. Reading and writing are also some of her other favorite things to do.

Teaching Philosophy

Mrs. Van Singel's teaching philosophy is based upon building a strong classroom community that fosters and nurtures a student centered approach to learning. Through supportive relationships within the classroom, students become more open and engaged to the learning, which in turn produces powerful classroom dialogue, peer-learning, and hands on exploration opportunities, enriching students' classroom experience. Mrs. Van Singel believes in each and every student, as well as believes that each and every student can achieve.

Mrs. Lillibridge

Mrs. Lillibridge graduated from Grand Valley State University with a major in Mathematics and an emphasis in Elementary Education. She knew from a very young age that she wanted to be a teacher. Mrs. Lillibridge loves teaching and fostering the same love of learning in her students. Though she has spent the past two years in kindergarten, she is very excited to be teaching 6th graders this year! When she is not teaching, she is likely spending time with her husband, Nate, and their energetic dog, Reese. Mrs. Lillibridge enjoys all things outdoors including hunting, fishing, camping, kayaking, and running.

Teaching Philosophy

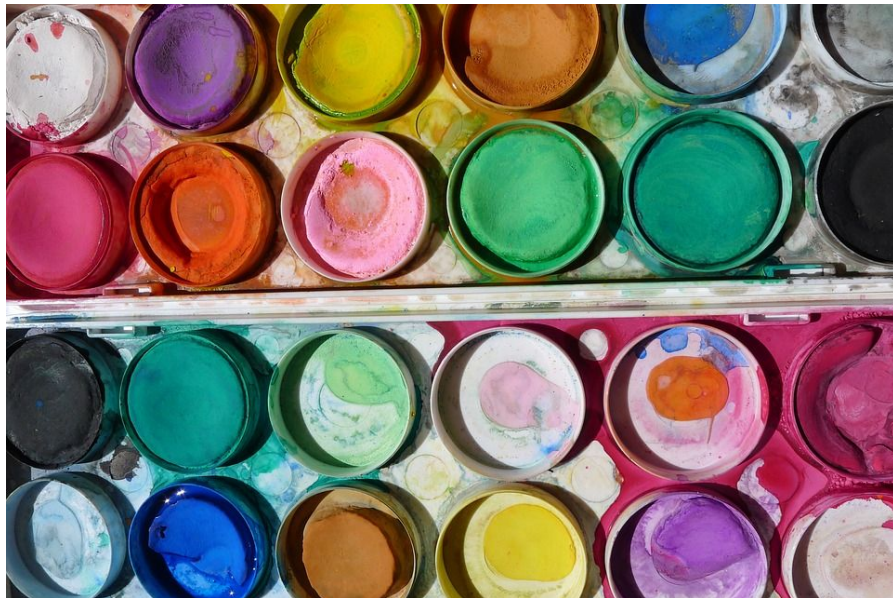
Mrs. Lillibridge believes learning takes place best in a safe positive environment where all students are accepted for who and where they are in their educational journey. Through arts integration students are provided with new avenues for communicating and making connections in their world to deepen understanding. Collaboration between teacher, students, and parents, grounded in mutual respect and trust, is also essential for effective learning.

Mr. Ottenbaker

Mr. Ottenbaker graduated from Michigan State University with an emphasis in secondary teaching and holds degrees in Earth Science and Geography. He is currently working on his master's degree in instruction and curriculum design at Grand Valley State University. When he is not teaching, Mr. Ottenbaker spends his Saturdays in the fall attending MSU football games while also enjoying the outdoors with his fiancé and their two dogs, Libby and Mila. Previously Mr. Ottenbaker was a high school science teacher at iCademy Global in Zeeland, MI where he taught Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Earth Science.

Teaching Philosophy

Mr. Ottenbaker believes students learn best when they feel safe, confident and take ownership in their own learning. Through group projects and laboratory experiments, Mr. Ottenbaker brings science alive and connects it to real world experiences. Mr. Ottenbaker preaches the power of "yet" as he pushes his students to grow and achieve their goals through optimism and positivity.



Arts at WMAAA

The academy places an equal emphasis on the arts and academic subjects within our curriculum. To help achieve this, our arts programs have two distinctive goals. The first goal is achieved through the arts and academics integration process, whereby academic concepts studied in the classroom are studied and reinforced through the arts. Secondly, specific arts skills, which have been aligned with the state and national standards for the arts, are studied with the intent of developing basic arts competencies. In grades 1 and 2, scheduled arts classroom time includes both of these components and all students receive instruction in all four arts forms on a weekly basis. Beginning in grade 3, the integration process and the arts skills process is separated allowing students a choice in the specific arts forms to which they would like more in-depth exposure.



WMAAA'S Arts program provides outstanding education in theatre, dance, visual art and music. The arts engage the student in the acts of creating and performing, offering each child a valuable means of self-expression. Appealing to a variety of learning styles, a focus on the arts helps to develop children mentally, emotionally and physically.

Arts programs at WMAAA provide the learner with opportunities to explore how thoughts, emotions and knowledge are conveyed and expressed through dance / movement, creative dramatics, visual arts and music. WMAAA students, through their participation in the various disciplines, will leave the Academy with an appreciation of

the arts, necessary critical thinking skills, and experiences to provide them with the desire to pursue the arts in their future.

6th Grade Classroom Management Plan

Our classroom management plan is a contract we make with our students that promises, to the best of our abilities, we will protect one another's right to learn and enjoyment for school without interference.

Expectations:

1. Be respectful.
2. Be responsible.
3. Be prepared.

Consequences:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1st time an expectation is broken: | Warning |
| 2nd time an expectation is broken: | Move to a different seat |
| 3rd time an expectation is broken: | Letter home |

[A copy of the "Parent Letter" is included on the next page.]

Dear Parents,

_____ did not meet the following expectations today, _____:

_____ **Be respectful** to others and to yourself

_____ **Be responsible** by listening to the teacher & doing what is
expected

_____ **Be prepared** by coming to class with all items needed for success

Classroom expectations must be followed in order to protect the rights of every student to learn and enjoy school. By choosing not to follow them, your child interfered with those rights.

Please acknowledge receiving this letter by signing your name at the bottom and having your child return it to me tomorrow.

Teacher comments:

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Mrs. VanSingel, Mrs. Lillibridge, & Mr. Ottenbaker

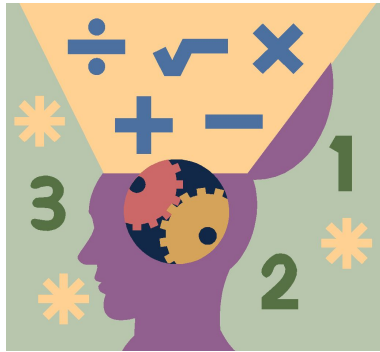
Parent Signature _____

MATH

Sixth grade uses **GO MATH!** from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. “**Go Math!**” is research-based and includes multiple approaches to learning. The material provides differentiated instructional resources and tiered interventions and technology solutions to support and motivate to help ensure all students can successfully meet more focused and rigorous mathematics standards.

Our year will be centered on **Three Big Ideas**:

- 1) Decimal & Fraction Operations
- 2) Ratio, Proportional Reasoning, & Percents
- 3) Algebra: Expressions, Equations, & Functions.



SCIENCE

This year we will cover 4 main topics:

- Physical Science: “Energetic Connections”
Earth Science: “Planet Rock”
Earth Science: “Earth: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow”
Life Science: “Energy in an Ecosystem”

We will be using units created at the Battle Creek Area Mathematics and Science Center. The units are designed to promote inquiry-based science which is part of STEAM [Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math].

Students will be asked to construct, reflect on, and apply new scientific knowledge. Our goal is for them to become a learner as well as a user of knowledge.

SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM

Our studies this year will focus primarily on the Western Hemisphere. The history, culture, economy, and geographical structure of Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean Islands, Central America, South America, and ancient civilization of those locations. We also include a case study on the European Union as well as Ancient Greece. I believe that it is my job to equip students to be responsible citizens who make informed decisions and take an active role in society. We will begin each unit with an overall “big Idea” or issue that drives our investigation into the area and gives us a reason to learn about these topics.

LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM

Reading: Students will read and analyze a wide variety of literature including informational text, short stories, and historical fiction. Reading will be done individually, in small groups, and as a class through novel studies and literature circles.

Writing: Students will follow the writing process to create a variety of written pieces including: original poetry, personal narratives, argumentative, literary, and expository essays. Students will write across the curriculum in a variety of settings.

Grammar & Mechanics: Students will continue to learn and apply skills such as: punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure, and parts of speech. Weekly review and practice will be provided through mini lessons that connect directly to a specific unit of study. Skills will also be reviewed and practiced in the context of written pieces through focus area correction.

Spelling: Students will follow the Evidence Based Literacy Instruction (EBLI) model for spelling. EBLI is a researched based literacy instructional practice that is embedded into effective, efficient strategies and activities that teach learners of all ages and ability levels to reach their highest potential in not only spelling, but reading as well.

HOMEWORK POLICY

You can expect your student to have homework most nights. All homework is due the day after it is assigned, unless another date has been given. Daily work is 50% if late until the end of the unit. Assessment is lowered 20% per day till it is a zero. If you have an excused absence you will be allowed 2 days per day you were absent to get your work in for full credit. (Example: absent 1 day → you have 2 days to make up the work).

GRADING SCALE

A	94%+	C	74-76%
A-	90-93%	C-	70-73%
B+	87-89%	D+	67-69%
B	84-86%	D	64-66%
B-	80-83%	D-	60-63%
C+	77-79%	E	0-59%

GRADING BREAK DOWN FOR ALL SUBJECTS

Daily Work = 30%
Assessment = 70%

COMMUNICATION

Please check our classroom website daily for homework assignments and updates. Contact information, important links to resources and dates are all there for you as a one stop shopping source!

Class Website: <http://6thgradestories.weebly.com>

Each Friday a folder will come home with some of the work your child has done that week. (Daily work will also be in the Student's 3-ring binder for Math, Language Arts, Science and Social Studies.) The Friday Folder will contain the school's newsletter and any other information that you may need such as permission slips, book orders, and fundraisers. We will send home a classroom newsletter with updates concerning quizzes, tests, and other deadlines as needed. Please look over items in the folder and discuss them with your child. If we need to be contacted with important information – please send a separate note for your child to give to us personally, email us, or call. All folders must be turned in the following Monday.



PLANNERS

Students must fill out their planners **every** day and have them initialed by parents **every** night. Advance notice of quizzes and tests will also show up in the weekly planner. We will check planners during homeroom at the end of the day, while students will update their planner throughout the day.

If a student goes 3 days in a row without their planner, or it not being signed, the student will serve a detention. A letter will be sent home that day to let parents know when students are to serve this detention.

Parents may stay up to date with **Infinite Campus**. All assignments and grades for your student will be available to you online. If you have lost your password or you never had one – please check with the school office to obtain that.

OTHER INFORMATION

* Only water bottles are allowed on the desk.

* Students have 25 minutes for lunch. Each classroom has a microwave available. **Microwaves are for warming food – not for cooking food.** Cooking takes too long. The students have done a great job of self-regulating the microwaves. Students are responsible for their own silverware and plates, this will NOT be provided. In order for a student to use the microwave they should have a paper plate.

Snacks: If your child is hungry during the day, they may grab a HEALTHY snack that may be eaten at the end of their first hour class. Snacks are to be eaten at student tables and in a timely manner. The snack may consist of fruits and veggies and must be MESS FREE. For example, if you bring an orange it must be peeled ahead of time. We will give the students more detail in class. Snacks are a privilege. If

students choose to abuse the privilege they will no longer be able to have a snack in class.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We have read and understand the 6th grade handbook policies and procedures for West Michigan Academy of Arts & Academics.

Parent / Guardian Signature

Student Signature

Date