**6th GRADE SCIENCE EXPECTATIONS**

**(A fast-break classroom)**

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The sixth grade science curriculum is very challenging for sixth grade students. The textbook dives very deep into a number of abstract scientific ideologies. In order to fully prepare all students for the ISTEP, we must move at a very quick pace. The book is broken down into three major units. The first unit consists of learning about energy and matter. The second unit is all about understanding our universe, the earth, moon, and other planets in our galaxy. The third unit is about interactions of life such as populations, ecosystems, and biomes. Students will be challenged and engaged on a day-to-day basis in the classroom. Through much discussion with Jr. High teachers and students, the number one difficulty noticed for seventh graders is the ability to read through a textbook chapter and summarize the information. A good portion of the science class this year will be geared around learning to read a nonfiction text and take good notes based off of what is read. The ability to be a good note taker will be extremely beneficial for students for the rest of their scholastic careers in junior high, high school, and college. Each student will be given a student workbook which has sections based solely on taking notes from the chapter. Students will fill out this note-taking section in their workbook as they read through each science lesson in the textbook. Generally all class periods will be broken down into segments. There will be a D.O.S. segment (discussed below), a reading/note-taking segment, and a lab/demonstration segment which could include scientific investigation labs, web quests, scientific videos, or guest speakers from the field of science. Every single page that we read from every lesson in the textbook is attacked in this manner. We read it, we demonstrate it, and we take notes on it. This method has been proven to work and students will get used to and appreciate this consistent routine!

**Grading/Homework**

Students will be graded on the list of items discussed below. Final grades are weighted, with each category being worth a different percentage of the students’ final grade. The grade weight percentages are listed next to each category.

**1. Participation (10%)-**I am a big believer in students taking an active role in their learning. Each nine weeks the students will be provided with a participation grid sheet. Each time a student participates in class, I will initial a box on their sheet. Students can participate in class by volunteering to answer a question, reading aloud in class, or volunteering to help out in teacher demonstrations. At the end of each nine week period, I will collect students’ participation sheets and grade them. After the first nine weeks, students turning in sheets with 30 initialed boxes will receive the required 30 participation points for an A+. The second nine weeks, the number of required participation points goes up to 35, and for the third and fourth nine weeks the requirement jumps up to 40. I will allow students to have up to five bonus points each nine weeks. Meaning it is possible to get a 105% on your participation grade for the nine weeks. **It is paramount that students keep this participation sheet and do not lose it, or they will face a deduction in their final participation grade!**

**2. D.O.S (20%)-**The acronym stands for, “Daily Oral Science.” At the beginning of most classes, I will have three questions on the board. Students will be given the first five minutes of class to answer those questions. The questions will be based on the information that was covered during the previous class session, or information that students are struggling with on homework. At the end of five minutes, students will trade and grade their papers as I go through the correct answers for each question. I trade and grade so that students can receive instant feedback as to how they performed. I will then collect all of the students work and re-grade them to ensure accuracy and evaluate student knowledge. Students are generally given a weekly DOS grade. Each week I will average their five daily DOS grades and enter it into the official gradebook.

**3. Lesson/Guided Review packets (30%)-**Over the course of the week students will be assigned worksheet packets based on the current and previous lesson material. Students will receive class time to start many of these packets, but will be expected to complete whatever is not done during class on their own time. Each assignment will be worth a specified number of points. Questions in the packets will be a mixture of multiple choice, matching, modified true/false, and short answer essay questions. These packets will be challenging for students, but they will help the students apply the information they learned in class. The packets will also help prepare the students for the state standardized 6th grade science ISTEP test which students will take at the end of the year. **Students can always refer to their notes and textbook in order to help them complete the packets! Homework assignments are the responsibility of the student and not the parent. Homework is to be completed fully every time it is assigned. More than two blank problems will result in an incomplete for that assignment! Students need to take ownership of their work and they need to learn proper study skills. Checking over a homework assignment to make sure it is complete and done is a great skill that each student will need to develop. A parent saying that they did not check over the work, or that they misplaced the work is NOT a valid excuse! Again, I hold the student accountable for his or her work and no one else! Sixth grade is truly the beginning of the “growing up” process that all students must go through!**

**4. Quizzes and Tests (40%)-**Generally, every Friday in class will be an assessment day. Students will either be given a quiz on the lesson covered during the week or a test over the current chapter of study. Generally, each chapter has two to four lessons within it. Students will be quizzed over each lesson and when all lessons are complete, a test will then be taken over the entire chapter. Students will need to show both concrete and abstract knowledge of the information covered in the lesson or chapter in order to receive an A. Students will be allowed to use their notes from their note-taking section on their tests, thus further validating the importance of taking good notes throughout the week. **No notes will be allowed to be used for quizzes. Students MUST learn to study for their tests and quizzes before they take them. Again, learning proper study skills will be crucial for students not only in my class, but for the rest of their school careers!**

**General Notes**

Students can expect to have some work to do for science pretty much every night of the week. However, I rarely assign homework on the weekends. Students will be given some class time for all homework items, and will also be given some study hall time in which to get work done. **I am always available to the students for questions during study hall time and after school.** All sixth grade teachers will also hold study tables after school later in the school year. I also want to again stress that it is quite crucial that students take care and keep track of all of their materials (e.g. participation sheets and student workbooks). Students losing their materials will not be a valid excuse and will result in poor grades. My expectations for sixth grade students are very high, and I demand that they be responsible for all of their classroom materials. Science class for the sixth graders will be challenging and demanding at times; however, if students are willing to fully engage themselves in the class and the work, they will do quite well and find that they are not only better science students, but better all –around students, as well. I have described my class above as a fast-break classroom. We have a lot of material to cover and I stay very focused during class time. Being organized and focused helps us cover all standards before students take the ISTEP test in the spring. The importance of ISTEP for both the school and for me as a teacher necessitates that I move the class very quickly. The students will also gain a lot of valuable knowledge about the natural world that will help them as they transition to much more abstract science courses in junior high and high school. Students will have to work very hard in my room and I expect and demand that they do! I am very enthusiastic about the opportunity to teach your son or daughter this school year, and I will do my best to ensure that their sixth grade science experience is both gratifying and beneficial. Please follow me on Twitter **@mrcrossscience** for important class announcements. A reminder that Twitter is PUBLIC! It is designed for me to give out information, not have conversations. Questions can be asked by parents or students, but should not include any private information or include any student names. Any comments to me on Twitter should be professional, positive, and relevant. **Please call, e-mail, or visit me to discuss anything of major relevance!** Failure to follow the above mentioned guidelines will result in being blocked from my class Twitter account. Also, please use my website ([www.mrcross.net](http://www.mrcross.net)) daily to see much more in-depth and detailed class summaries and announcements. Parents and students will also find useful learning resources on my website as well! There is also information on the website about the sixth grade DARE program and the after school Fitness Club!

 -Mr. Cross

(Learn Like A Champion Today)

* **START EVERY ACTIVITY PROMPTLY**
* **PAY ATTENTION TO DETAIL**
* **BRING EFFORT AND ENTHUSIASM EVERYDAY**
* **TAKE GOOD NOTES AND USE THEM**
* **RE-READ TEXTBOOK MATERIAL**
* **DO YOUR HOMEWORK! NO MISSING ASSIGNMENTS!**
* **PARTICIPATE IN CLASS (IT IS 10% OF YOUR GRADE)**
* **SEEK HELP FROM MR. CROSS WHEN NEEDED**
* **STUDY FOR QUIZZES AND TESTS**

I have read this expectations sheet and understand what to expect for my child’s sixth grade science class.

**AGAIN, PLEASE VIST MY WEBSITE** [**WWW.MRCROSS.NET**](http://WWW.MRCROSS.NET) **AND FOLLOW ME ON TWITTER @mrcrossscience**

Student name:

Parent name:

Date:

(Signing and turning this sheet into Mr. Cross will be worth two participation points for the first nine weeks)