



6th Grade

Program Overview

Update: August 28, 2014



Sixth grad marks the beginning of middle school and a new range of experiences and expectations. The academic environment changes as students are now more able to analyze topics, think critically, read more advanced material, and express themselves in extended essays. As bodies mature and emotions play their role in adolescent development, the school provides opportunities for hands-on inquiry-based learning, projects, and physical activity. Students can choose to participate in sports tournaments, band and orchestra concerts, and drama productions. Exploratory learning is provided through elective courses each quarter.

Language of Literature provides a strong base for English studies. "Process writing" continues. Spelling and usage skills are developed through writing. Typing via computer is expected.

Math skills are practiced using the McDougal Littell's *Mathematics Grade 6* textbook.

Holt Science & Technology *Earth Science* is the Science text; Holt's *World History* is the Social Studies text..

We encourage young people to use their personal *Student NIV Bible* provided by Morrison Academy for use in Grades 6-12 for both home and school reading.

Specialists teach your child Mandarin Chinese, art, music, physical education, and library skills. Each has a vital part in your child's week.

Language Arts

Students are created in God's image with the unique ability to communicate, create, and express ideas. The language arts develop these abilities to understand and influence God's world for His glory. Therefore, Morrison offers a balanced language arts approach that teaches students to read with fluency and comprehension, evaluate text and media with discernment, listen with understanding and compassion, speak with conviction and effect, and write with clarity and persuasion. (O'Malley 1999)

Students in sixth grade continue to reinforce skills from previous grades, and begin some new skills. In Literature, they learn Greek and Latin root words to help them understand what they read and how to connect what they read to the world around them more explicitly. Their writing assignments focus more on their ability to explain themselves clearly and persuade others convincingly, and they take more charge over the writing process themselves. In research, they learn advanced search techniques to find information, use critical thinking skills to judge which sources are appropriate, and apply summarizing skills to truly understand what they have read. Speaking and listening skills become more complex, requiring them to take notes from oral instruction and use presentation software in their speeches. When viewing media, they learn to evaluate what they see from a Biblical worldview.

Reading

New vocabulary: common Greek & Latin roots, prefixes & suffixes

Use all the reading strategies

Non-fiction: reinforce grades 1-5

Fiction: describe simple relationships between story elements, conflict, & resolution

Writing

Imaginative story (500-1,000 wds) or

Personal narrative (200-400 wds) with complex dialogue

Expository: 3 paragraphs with variety of purposes

Research project using Big 6 (5 minute presentation)

Traits of Writing

Speaking/Listening

Persuade, narrate, explain using
basic presentation software

Use listening comprehension strategies
(note-taking)



Math

Morrison Academy strives to develop students who obtain a mastery of, and appreciation for, the content and processes of mathematics, as well as an understanding of how mathematics relates to other domains in life. While the study of mathematics occurs mostly within finite creation, it points us towards the character of an infinite God who values logic, order and consistency. Therefore, the purpose of mathematical instruction at Morrison is to develop students whose mastery of content includes insight into logical processes that will enable students to make meaningful connections to a world of order and help them transfer math concepts to other domains consistent to life. Such tangible engagement with math will help Morrison's students dynamically impact their world for Christ.

Beginning in 6th grade, focus shifts to rates, ratios, and proportions. In addition, students begin to use the standard algorithm for division exclusively. A strand covering "Expressions and Equations" is introduced, which increases the abstract and algebraic nature of the mathematics. The four critical areas in 6th grade are: (1) connecting ratio and rate to whole number multiplication and division and using concepts of ratio and rate to solve problems; (2) completing understanding of division of fractions and extending the notion of number to the system of rational numbers, which includes negative numbers; (3) writing, interpreting, and using expressions and equations; and (4) developing understanding of statistical thinking.



Science

Morrison's science program seeks to help students gain knowledge of God through the study of His creation. This is accomplished with an activity-oriented program where teachers and students think analytically and logically, solve problems creatively, and use technology as a tool. Morrison endeavors to help students acquire developmentally appropriate concepts and science skills to make positive contributions as Christians in an increasingly scientific and technological society.

6th Grade- Earth Science

Earth science is a study of the Earth and its processes. Students will become familiar with plate tectonics, the shaping of Earth's surface, Earth's structure, energy in the Earth's system, Earth's history as well as learn how to function within a science lab.

Students will understand essential ideas about the composition and structure of the universe and the Earth's place within it. Students will also study creation and evolution as it pertains to Earth science.

Guidance

The guidance/counseling program of Morrison Academy provides a biblically-based program that is available to all students, teachers/staff and parents helping them to recognize their uniqueness as individuals in Christ. Morrison seeks to provide a primarily proactive and preventative program which enables students to fulfill God's purpose in their lives by maturing spiritually, emotionally, academically, physically and socially.

Sixth grade is a time of great change for students as they move from elementary to middle school. During this year Guidance issues will focus on helping kids make this transition. Topics of special interest are, dealing with stress, developing good study habits, and building friendships. The goal of the year is to build a strong foundation for their time in middle school.

Visual and Performing Arts

Morrison Academy recognizes that students are made in the image of their Creator and that God has endowed them with His creativity and individual gifts. Because training in visual and performing arts is an essential component of educating the whole person, students must be given the opportunity to explore, develop, and enjoy their God-given artistic abilities. Students will learn to express their creativity by experiencing, appreciating and discerning the arts from historical, contemporary and multi-cultural perspectives. Morrison Academy's arts programs endeavor to use the arts to glorify and worship God, equip students to serve His church, and impact their world in a relevant and dynamic way.

Performing Arts

Middle School Band

Students will continue to develop individual skills on a wind or percussion instrument with increased emphasis on ensemble skills.

Middle School Choir

Students will continue to develop individual vocal skills with increased emphasis on music reading and ensemble singing.

Middle School Orchestra

Students will continue to develop individual skills on a string instrument with increased emphasis on bowing, position techniques, and ensemble skills.

Co-Curricular courses

Visual Arts

Students who complete the middle school visual arts program at Morrison Academy create art work in both second and third dimensions and use different art mediums. They know and use each of the elements and principles of art. They safely and properly handle and use a variety of art tools and materials. They communicate, through their art, their own thoughts and emotions. They appreciate the art work of their peers, the art of both historical and contemporary artists, and the art from other cultures. They are aware of the place of art and artists in society.

Middle School students are required to take at least one quarter art course per grade per year as part of the Middle School Exploratory Courses (EC). These courses include a wide variety of mediums, and art experiences. In addition to or included in these choices, students will take a one-quarter Art Core course once during their middle school years. Middle School students develop art skills and learn new skills while creating their own original art work. Students will use art to express themselves and communicate themes, ideas, or messages. They will learn to interpret and analyze their own art and appreciate the art of their peers, and the art of historical and contemporary artists. They will have opportunity to use digital tools to create graphics, illustrations or presentations.

Health

Morrison Academy is committed to following Christ's example of a balanced life. Therefore we desire growth in four areas: wisdom (mental/emotional), stature (physical), favor with God (spiritual), and favor with man (social). Consistent with our integrated-based philosophy of education, we strive to incorporate instruction for life-long wellness throughout the curriculum.

Physical Education

All people are creations of God designed to know and glorify Him through their lives and action. Therefore, Morrison's physical education program recognizes that our bodies are temples of God to be appropriately cared for and used in developing a mentally, physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually balanced life.

Students will continue to learn and work on advanced locomotor movements and advanced skill development by using games and drills that are age-appropriate. This will be accomplished by primarily focusing on team sports (softball, soccer, volleyball, basketball, etc...) where they develop sport specific drills, and better understand the rules for the different sports. In 6-8 PE, instruction is also directed toward incorporating physical activity into a daily routine as well as deepening a biblical understanding of exercise and being a part of a team.

Library Media

Morrison Academy recognizes that people are gifted by God with the ability to inquire, gain knowledge, and delight in the creativity of others. Morrison Academy library program strives to equip students to enjoy information by teaching them how to use information effectively. The Library Media Center will support students by providing opportunities to become critical thinkers, life-long learners, enthusiastic readers, skillful researchers, and ethical users of information

The Middle School library media classes focus on ensuring that students read widely for pleasure and information as well as understand how to use resources correctly for inquiry. Students use digital resources extensively and develop an increased awareness of the impact that technology has in their lives (both positive and negative). They learn how to evaluate and use sources ethically. They are also asked to make connections from literature to other types of media and to create their own digital resources, such as blogs, wikis, and book trailers.

Social Studies

Social studies instruction at Morrison unites two important elements:

- *Acquiring a solid knowledge base of historical, geographical, civic, economic, and cultural concepts.*
- *Acquiring a social studies skill set to apply knowledge to situations using a global Christian perspective.*

Morrison's social studies program seeks to develop students who can influence the kingdoms of mankind as critically-thinking citizens of the Kingdom of God. We provide developmentally appropriate instruction through a balance of inquiry learning and direct teaching. Though implementing a United States based curriculum, we recognize the importance of a global approach to social studies curricula to meet the needs of our diverse population.

World History: Creation through 1500's.

Sixth Grade students at Morrison Academy expand their understanding of God's story by studying peoples, events and geography beginning with the study of Creation continuing through the 1500's. Major Western and non-Western ancient and classical civilizations are explored starting in the cradle of civilization, passing through medieval Europe, and closing with the Renaissance and Reformation.



Bible

God is the source of all truth, and the Bible is God's special revelation for all humanity. Through it we are introduced to the life of faith and the redemption offered to all in Christ Jesus. We comprehensively teach the Bible to foster biblical literacy, develop spiritual discernment, and equip students with a Christian worldview resulting in students who are transformed by the Holy Spirit and willing to be obedient to God's truth. Bible education aims to encourage each student to love God and to serve others.

The Morrison Academy Bible Curriculum: 5 strands

- *Biblical Literacy*-Students will know basic content of the Bible: stories about Old and New Testament characters, chronology, cultural and historical background, recurring themes and topics.
- *Spiritual Discernment*-Students will be able to appreciate who God is and accept one's self worth as God's creation, while distinguishing right from wrong.
- *Biblical Worldview*-Bible classes not only impart biblical and theological knowledge but use it as the basis of a biblical worldview which is used to explore the world.
- *Christian Character*-Through the teaching of the Bible we desire to see the love of God perfected in our students so that they know God, obey God's commands and love others.
- *Christian Service*-Beginning in middle school, intentional, hands-on service to local and global communities enhances students' academic learning, a natural outworking of biblical truth.

What does it mean to live as a Christian? **The sixth grade course** will give an introduction to the foundations of Christian faith.

Through this study, students will attain a clearer understanding of salvation, learn how to study God's Word, understand the role of prayer, and what it means to share their faith in love.

Mandarin Chinese

God has given us the gift of language to communicate with Him, ourselves, and others. Morrison's Mandarin Chinese program is a foreign language program that equips all students to communicate more effectively in a global context to better impact their world as Christians. This is done through a unit-driven curricular program that teaches all students the four basic tenets (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) of communication as well as Chinese culture and Christian concepts.

Teachers use high yield instructional strategies, a variety of materials, teaching styles, and enriching activities that are age-appropriate, promote higher order thinking, relevant, and integrate technology and faith.



How Parents Can Help

Activities That Support Learning

- Listen to your adolescent
- Model the importance of reading by being a reader yourself
- Talk with your son or daughter rather than at him/her
- Encourage keeping a writing notebook or journal
- Provide a quiet place for homework and study
- Encourage early completion of homework while allowing natural consequences of lapses
- Help your youth understand and capitalize on his/her learning style
- Allow your youth to develop independence
- Encourage asking questions and seeking answers
- Celebrate successes
- Create special times to be alone with your youth to participate in activities--camping, hiking, running, sports, concerts
- Take your youth to places and talk about the visits
- Limit time spent on computer games
- Tell your family stories, especially events that happened when you were the age of your adolescents
- Watch television with your youth and discuss the programs together; limit viewing time; choose programs with care
- Play memory and math games, vocabulary games, physical games
- Talk with your youth about the school work he/she brings home
- Give responsibilities
- Communicate your expectations regarding behavior and performance at school

"Fathers, do not make your children angry, but raise them with the training and teaching of the Lord." Ephesians 6:4 (ICB)