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# BACK TO SCHOOL

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**GRADES 5-6**

PARENTING  
CLASSES

# Communicating with Teachers and Administration

## Approaching Teachers and Administration

- Partner with your teacher to lead and love your child.
- Remember that you represent Jesus.
- If you're emotional, wait before writing or speaking.
- Be respectful and listen — teachers are people, too.
- Start with something positive before bringing your concerns.
- Ask clarifying questions about resources used in class.
- Collaborate with the teacher — you're a team.
- Summarize and clarify next steps.
- Focus on a solution.

## Participating in Local Education

- School Board meetings
- Follow Riverside Unified School District Facebook page.

# 5th and 6th Grade Development

## How does your child learn?

- They have varying academic abilities at school.
- They begin to see others' points of view more clearly.
- They develop an increased attention span and explore a range of interests.
- They are in the process of learning to use good judgment.
- They have interests in collections and hobbies.
- They understand more complex thought processes and types of humor.

## Emotional Development

- They develop skills related to decision-making.
- They experience comparisons with others difficult to emotionally process.
- They may push and pull for both space and connection with caregivers.
- They may experience "what if" worries.
- They judge ideas in absolutes and struggle to process middle ground information.

## Relational Development

- They become increasingly more independent from the family.
- They still experience the need for the involvement of a caring adult.
- They generally see adults as authority.
- They are loyal to groups.
- They enjoy code languages and passwords.
- They prefer to work in groups for cooperative activities.
- They approach solving problems with a negotiating style, and they are capable of compromising with peers when necessary.

## Identity Development

- They identify with individuals of the same gender.
- They are beginning to question authority.
- They are accepting of family beliefs.
- They admire and imitate older youth.
- They are more aware of achievements and challenges.
- They become more aware of their body as puberty approaches.

## Parenting Tips

- Spend quality time with your child both individually and together as a family.
- Talk with them about friendships, accomplishments, and challenges.
- Be involved with your child's school and homework.
- Encourage your child to get involved in school and community groups.
- Help your child develop their own sense of right and wrong.
- Talk with your child about unsafe/risky behaviors they might notice in others and how to handle peer pressure.
- Help your child develop a sense of responsibility through involvement in household tasks.
- Talk with your child about respecting others and what they can do when others are not kind or are disrespectful.
- Help your child set their own goals, and teach them how to develop skills and identify personal abilities.
- Have clear rules for the family and stick to them.
- Use discipline to guide and protect your child.
- Use specific praise to help your child think about their own accomplishments and encourage your child to make good choices when nobody is around.
- Talk with your child about the normal physical and emotional changes of puberty.

Faber, Adel, & Mazlish, Elaine. *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids will Talk*. Scribner, 2012.

Siegel, Daniel J., & Tina Payne Bryson. *The Whole-Brain Child*. Constable & Robinson, 2012.

Tripp, Paul David. *Parenting: 14 Gospel Principles that Can Radically Change Your Family*. Crossway, 2016.

# 5th Grade Curriculum

- U.S. History: Pre-Colonization to Civil War including Government
- Communication is the Key: Talk daily with your child about school.
- Stay Informed: Be aware of topics that kids talk about in the classroom and on the playground. When U.S. History is discussed, your child might have questions about the way we treated Native American Indians, the development of slavery, political parties, the presidency, illegal immigration, and the topic of Critical Race Theory.
- Sex Education: You have the right to preview all sex education materials that the district has purchased. You have the right to opt your child out of all of the sex education lessons.
- Enrichment Activities: Classroom teachers have the ability to add enrichment assignments to the daily lesson plans provided in the district curriculum. These assignments can be purchased from Teachers Pay Teacher website or pushed through an app on the student Chromebooks. Most lessons are very educational; however, some do cover controversial topics, such as Gay Pride Week, Transgender Interviews, and the Black Lives Matter marches.
- Monthly Celebrations: Front-load your child at the start of each month if you know certain holidays and celebrations might be discussed in school. This will open communication with your child and give your student a chance to understand a Biblical view of the celebration or different religions.

# 6th Grade Curriculum

## Language Arts

- Your child's teacher may decide to teach the state standards through a novel rather than using the adopted curriculum. Ask the teacher what novels they plan to teach this year.

## Social Studies

- Early Man (Evolution)
- Grade 6 focuses on Ancient Cultures, and within each unit of study, your child may learn about the following religions as they relate to the government of the culture being studied:
  - Greece (Greek Mythology)
  - India (Hinduism)
  - China (Buddhism)
  - Israel (Judaism, Judeochristianity),
  - Rome (Roman Mythology).

## Science

- Climate change as it pertains to weather
- Human impact on the environment

# Calendar of Events Discussed in Some Classrooms

- September: Hispanic Heritage Month, Labor Day, Patriots Day (911 Remembrance Day)
- October: Columbus Day, Halloween, Dia De Los Muertos (Day of the Dead)
- November: Election Day, American Thanksgiving/ Native Americans, Veterans Day
- December: Christmas Around the World, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Christmas
- January: Inauguration Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- February: Black History Month, Lunar New Year, President's Day
- March: Women's History Month, Cesar Chavez Day
- April: Earth Day
- May: Asian/Pacific Island Heritage Month, Mental Health Month, Memorial Day
- June: Flag Day, LGBTQ Pride Month, Juneteenth

## State Standards and Hot Topics

- **Student Behavior** – There has been a huge shift in student behavior since students returned from the COVID lockdown. Many districts are searching for ways to meet the social/emotional needs of students. Many children spent endless hours of each day looking at a screen and have returned to school lacking social and academic skills. Teachers are exhausted from having to monitor student behavior and get students caught up to grade level academically. Teachers need support from the parents.
- **Positive Behavior Interventions and Support** – Districts across the U.S. are implementing this tiered framework that supports student behavior. Teachers are encouraged to reward the positive and build relationships with students that will foster better student behavior. Many parents are frustrated because they see a lack of discipline and consequences. One goal is to reduce the amount of suspensions. So often children are sent back to class after they have taken part in a restorative conversation. I encourage you to speak with teachers and administrators on your campus to see how PBIS strategies are being implemented at your school site.
- **Holidays** – Keep track of the monthly holidays. Many teachers focus lessons on the holidays. Always ask your child what they are learning in school about different holidays or religions.
- **Heroes** – Know the “heroes” your child is learning about. Social Studies and Language Arts extension activities may open up discussions about past presidents and also current LGBTQ leaders of today. Discussions may focus on what makes a family. Listen carefully if your child mentions titles to books in the classroom that you might consider questionable.
- **Enrichment** – Pay attention to the enrichment activities that teachers add on to their lessons, such as Newsela, Brain Pop, and Epic. These web sites contain information some parents find objectionable (Transgender, LGBTQ, and Black Lives Matter information).
- **Fair Education Act 2011 (SB48)** – State Board of Education approved the nations first law requiring public schools to include prominent Gay Americans in US History classes. The law states that people with disabilities, different ethnic groups, and LGBTQ Americans must be added to the curriculum. This includes grades 1-12.

### Examples of lessons that the framework suggest...

- 2nd grade – Students can learn that families can have 2 moms or 2 dads. Students learn about colonial times and the gender roles from that time period vs. the gender roles of today.
- 3rd grade – Introduce Harvey Milk and his great contributions as a pioneer in gay politics. Compare and contrast different types of flags (including the gay pride flag).
- 4th grade – Highlight California and California state’s role in embracing the Gay Rights Movement.
- 5th-8th grade – Discuss gender roles and LGBTQ leaders.
- 12th grade – Capstone project could include learning about the 2015 Super Court ruling that legalized same sex marriage, or students would study recent cases involving transgender students in the school system who are fighting for their rights.

- **CANDO Plan**

- **C** Close eyes immediately
- **A** Always tell trusted adult
- **N** Name it when I see it
- **D** Distract my eyes
- **O** Order my thinking brain to be the boss

### Resources for 5th Grade

*A Chicken’s Guide to Talking Turkey about Sex* by Keven Leman

*What Your Fifth Grader Needs to Know* by E.D. Hirsch Jr.

*Good Pictures Bad Pictures* by Kristen Jenson

Family Life Today – Articles on Purity – [familylife.com](http://familylife.com)

Focus on the Family – Sex Education Information – [focusonthefamily.com](http://focusonthefamily.com)

### Resources for 6th Grade

ELA Common Core Standards for Parents

History/Social Science Common Core Standards for Parents

Math Common Core Standards for Parents

Science Common Core Standards for Parents –

Creation Resources Trust Magazine-like format with lots of facts and articles explaining creationism as well as posing questions about evolution

Common Sense Media Quickly and easily get a run down of the content in the novels your child is reading

# Biblical Response

## Grades 5-6 – Biblical Teaching

**Model your faith** – The most significant thing you can do is model a consistent, godly lifestyle for your child.

**Help your children make truth their own** – They are beginning to become more of an individual and are wanting to make ideas their own. Embrace their questions and help them process and begin to “own” their faith.

### Who is God

1. Eternal, Creator of all things – Genesis 1:1,
2. Triune God – Father, Son, Spirit – existing eternally in perfect relationship with Himself – 2 Corinthians 13:14
3. Jesus – the Son of God, eternally existing. He became flesh and was sacrificed for our sin – John 1:1-5, John 1:14, Hebrews 10:10
4. Holy, perfect, not like us – He is perfectly loving and perfectly just – Isaiah 55:8-9
5. The Holy Spirit indwells us and teaches us – John 14:16-17, 27

### God’s Word

1. The Bible is from God. It is the primary way God speaks to us today. It is without error (inerrant), and it is our guide for life – 2 Timothy 3:16
2. We show that we love and follow Jesus by obeying His commands in the Bible – John 14:15
3. Living according to the Bible is the best way we can live. God blesses those who meditate on and live according to His Word. – Psalm 1, Psalm 119:9-16
4. Encourage your child to read their Bible on their own and maybe meet up with them.
5. A good way to discuss God’s Word with your child is by discussing the week’s message with them.

### The Gospel

1. God created everything. He loves us and desires relationship with us – Genesis 1, John 3:16
2. We have all sinned and are separated from God – Romans 3:23
3. Jesus died in our place to bring us back to God. He rose from the dead and now sits at the right hand of the Father – Colossians 1:21-22, Hebrews 1:3
4. If we confess and believe Jesus, we will be saved – Romans 10:9

### Sharing the Gospel

1. If we have been changed by God, we are called to reach all people with this Good News – Matthew 28:19-20
2. Sharing the Gospel is every believer’s privilege and responsibility.
3. Inviting friends to church to hear the Good News is a great way to start.
4. Become Gospel-fluent as opposed to Gospel-proficient.
5. Modeling Gospel fluency is one of the best things you can do for your child.

### Technology

1. Set boundaries, time limits, and expectations.
2. Model those boundaries.
3. Talk about when to give phone, tablet, or computer and set those boundaries.

**Friendship and Character** – Kids at this age are more independent. They choose own friends, and peer groups begin to have more influence.

To have a good friend, I need to be a good friend...

1. Putting others first and being humble – Philippians 2:1-5
2. Fruit of the Spirit – Galatians 5
3. Choosing friends wisely – Proverbs 13:20
4. God calls us to live differently than the world – transformed by God – Romans 12:1-2
5. We are to love all people and even defend the weak – Luke 10:25-37
6. We are even called to love our enemies – Matthew 5:44
7. Stand up for faith and how to disagree in love – Ephesians 4:15-16

### Gender

1. All people are created in the image of God. We were created as male and female. Marriage is God’s idea - it is between one man and one woman – Genesis 1:27, Genesis 2:22-24, Matthew 19:4-6
2. Any sexual activity other than one man and one woman in marriage is outside of God’s design – Hebrews 13:4
3. We are to love people who are different from us. We can be kind and loving and still disagree. – Ephesians 4:15-16

### Action Steps

1. Share the Gospel as a family – Invite a family to church (parents invite child) – Pray for your friend to know Jesus. Children this age aren’t autonomous. (even practicing)
2. Engage our kids to think biblically about ethics, current events, and politics. (What does the Bible say about this issue?)
3. Ask good questions... and listen... even engage with them in asking them good questions, such as, “What is the most difficult part of believing the Bible is true?”

# Resources

The Center for Faith, Sexuality & Gender

Crouch, Andy, and Amy Crouch. *The Tech-Wise Family: Everyday Steps for Putting Technology in Its Proper Place.*

Earley, Justin Whitmel. *Habits of the Household: Practicing the Story of God in Everyday Family Rhythms.* Zondervan, 2021.

Gilkerson, Luke, and Trisha Gilkerson. *Changes: 7 Biblical Lessons to Make Sense of Puberty.*

IMPACT – discipleship class for the Bridge Ministry

Keller, Kathy. *The New City Catechism: 52 Questions and Answers for Our Hearts and Minds (The Gospel Coalition).*

Message from Daniel Bishop on Gender and Culture

NIV Bible

Reinke, Tony. *12 Ways Your Phone Is Changing You.* Crossway, 2017.

Richards, Lawrence O. *It Couldn't Just Happen: Knowing the Truth About God's Awesome Creation.* Tommy Nelson, 2011.

2017-htttycah-online.pdf

(focusonthefamily.com) – Article on talking to kids about homosexuality