



**6th** Grade



**TRIO**

**Student Guidebook**

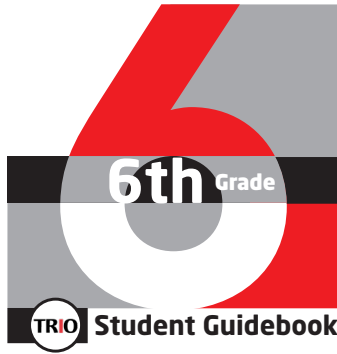


Hey TRIO 6th Graders,

Being in 6th grade means that you are older and smarter! It also means that your schoolwork will be more difficult, and that you're going to have to work harder in your classes.

Sixth grade is also a time to start thinking about the future—what kind of career you might like to have, and what kind of college you might like to go to.

Even though you are only in 6th grade, there are many things you can do now to plan and prepare for your future. This booklet will help you get started. And remember, TRIO will be there for you every step of the way!



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# welcome to 6th grade!



There are lots of things you can do to help make this a great year, but first, you need to remember why you're in school—to learn. It's great to have fun with your friends and get involved in activities, but your schoolwork should always be your top priority!

Doing well in school pays off in lots of ways. Your family and teachers are proud of you, school is more fun, and you feel really good about yourself. Of course, doing well in all of your classes can take a lot of work and effort. But if you develop good study habits and skills, succeeding in your classes and getting good grades won't be hard.

## What to expect this year

When something is new, it's helpful to know what to expect. Here's what might be different this year:

- ▶ **New teachers and classmates.** For many students, starting sixth grade means going to a new school. For all students, it means new teachers, harder classes, and new friends.
- ▶ **A new routine.** Class schedules, lunch periods, and class changes are just a few of the new daily routines that most middle school students have to adjust to.
- ▶ **More activities.** Most middle schools offer lots of activities, clubs, and athletic programs for their students.
- ▶ **Big expectations.** Middle school students are expected to be mature and responsible enough to handle harder classes, more homework, and more after-school activities.

# get organized

Being organized saves time and makes your day run more smoothly. Being organized isn't hard; however, it's a skill that needs to be worked on and practiced.



## Use a student planner

Use your planner every day to write down homework, tests, quizzes, activities, and anything else you want to remember.

## Have a plan for organizing papers

Whether you use folders, binders, or notebooks, the important thing is that you have a specific place for all of your papers (notes, handouts, homework, returned tests).

## Be a neat freak

Keep your locker and backpack neat, and organize your home study area. Having things organized makes it much easier to find the things you need.

## Be one step ahead

Get everything ready for the next day before you go to bed. If there's something you need to remember to do in the morning, leave yourself a note.

## Have routines

Have a morning routine that gets your day off to a good start. Make sure your routine includes getting up early enough to eat a good breakfast and not be rushed.

## Get rid of stuff

Put the papers you want to keep in a safe place at home, and throw away anything you don't want or need.

# study smart

Students who study smart spend less time studying, and yet they often get better grades. Here are some tips to help you study smart.



## Have a great place to study

Find a place to study that's quiet, well-lit, and comfortable. Also, make sure that you have all of the supplies you need.

## Get rid of distractions

Turn off the TV, and if you have a phone, silence it. Focus on the work you need to do.

## Plan your study time

Before you start your homework, make a plan. Decide what you want to get done, and the order in which you're going to do it. Allow more time than you think you'll need, and do the most important things first.

## Break large assignments down into smaller parts

Big assignments and projects can be overwhelming. Spreading the work out makes them easier to do—and much less stressful. Also, whenever you have a big project or assignment, make sure you start on it early.

## Choose the best time to study

Some students study best at night. Others like to study earlier in the day. Try to plan your day so that you study when you're at your best.

## Get started

Don't put off homework until you feel like doing it. Set a time to get started and stick to it. If you have a hard time getting started, do something that's easy or start with a subject you like.

# succeed in class

Showing up for class isn't enough. To succeed in your classes you need to be engaged and involved. Here's how you can stay engaged—and make the most of the time you are in class.



## Be prepared

When you come to class, have all of your homework done. Be alert, well-rested, and ready to learn.

## Participate

The best way to get the most out of your classes is to be actively involved. Ask and answer questions, and take part in discussions. You'll learn more and the time will go a lot faster.

There's nothing a teacher likes more than a student who pays attention and shows that they're interested. Be that student!

## Have a positive attitude

Walk into each class with a positive attitude, and try to learn as much as you can. Remember, the more you learn in class, the less you need to learn on your own.

## Take good notes

Since most test questions come from things your teachers talk about in class, having good notes to study from will help you do well on tests. Taking notes also helps you pay attention—when you're taking notes, you don't have time to think about or do anything else.

*To learn more about how to take good notes, check out this short video.*



# explore interests, abilities, and values

Even though high school graduation is several years away, it's not too early to think about what kinds of careers might be a good match for your interests, abilities, and values.

## Your interests

Your interests are the things you like doing and learning about. Thinking about your interests will help ensure that you spend your life doing something you love. Here are some questions to think about.

- ▶ What are your favorite school subjects?
- ▶ What are your favorite activities or hobbies?
- ▶ Would you rather help people, work with your hands, or do desk-type activities?
- ▶ Are there any careers you've always been interested in?

## Your abilities

Your abilities are what you're good at doing. Abilities can change as you get older, but focusing on what you're good at now will help you identify career areas to explore first.

- ▶ What subjects do you do well in?
- ▶ What activities are you good at?
- ▶ What are some skills you'd like to improve?

## Your values

Your values are what's important to you. They are the things that make a career or job meaningful to you. Below are some examples. Which of these are important to you in a career?

- ▶ making good money
- ▶ working inside
- ▶ making a difference
- ▶ being creative
- ▶ doing exciting work
- ▶ being in charge





# learn about **careers**

Careers related to your favorite school subjects are a great place to start when thinking about which careers might be a good match for you. Here are some examples.

## English

Court reporter  
Editor  
Journalist  
Lawyer  
Librarian  
Public relations  
Reporter  
Social media manager  
Speech pathologist  
Teacher/professor  
Writer/author

## Math

Accountant  
Engineer  
Financial planner  
Loan officer  
Mathematician  
Stockbroker  
Surveyor  
Systems analyst  
Teacher/professor  
Tool and die maker  
Web developer

## Science

Biologist  
Botanist  
Chemist  
Dentist  
Doctor  
Meteorologist  
Nurse  
Paramedic  
Physical therapist  
Veterinarian  
Zoologist

## The arts

Actor/actress  
Artist  
Dancer/choreographer  
Fashion designer  
Floral designer  
Graphic artist  
Interior designer  
Landscape architect  
Musician  
Photographer  
Sound engineer

## Social studies

Archaeologist  
Corrections officer  
Economist  
Geographer  
Lawyer  
Paralegal  
Police officer  
Psychologist  
Social worker  
Sociologist  
Urban planner

## World languages

Flight attendant  
Historian  
Interpreter  
Linguist  
Nurse  
Peace Corps worker  
Pilot  
Teacher/professor  
Tour guide  
Translator  
Travel agent

*STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) careers are some of the fastest growing. To learn about STEM careers, watch this short video.*



# why go to college?

As a TRIO student, you know that going to college is important, and that it takes a lot of hard work to get there. But you may sometimes wonder, “Is it really worth it?” The short answer is...yes!

Here are some reasons why going to college is a goal that’s worth working toward.

## **More career opportunities**

A college education can open doors and prepare you for a career that you’ll enjoy, pays well—and is a perfect match for your interests and abilities. With a college degree, the sky is the limit!

## **More money**

Studies show that four-year college graduates earn almost twice as much as people who only have a high school diploma. That comes out to \$1,000,000 or more over a lifetime.

## **New people and experiences**

Going to college will give you the opportunity to study a lot of different subjects, try new things, build new skills, and meet new people. Most importantly, college gives you the opportunity to become the person you want to be.

## **A sense of accomplishment**

Earning a college diploma is an accomplishment you can be proud of for the rest of your life—and a reminder that you can do anything you set your mind to!



# 6th grade

## college to-do list

Even though getting ready for college is still many years away, there are things you can do now to plan and prepare for college.

### Do well in school

If you want to go to college, you will need to take college prep classes in high school. To be ready for those classes, it's important that you develop good study habits and skills now—and give your best effort in all of your classes.

### Develop your interests

Participate in school activities. If you have a specific interest, talent, or passion, work on it this year. Also, take part in activities outside of school, and do some volunteer work if you can.

### Try new things

Middle school is a great time to try something new! Join a team, learn a new skill, or create something. Trying out new things is how you learn what you enjoy doing and what you're good at.



### Talk to people

Talk to family members, your TRIO teacher, your school counselor, and anyone else who might be able to tell you more about the careers you're interested in.

Also talk to the adults in your life about their careers—what they do, how they got into their careers, what they like and don't like, and whether they have any advice for you.

# be smart with money



For better or worse, our lives revolve around money. But more important than how much money you have is how well your money helps you reach your goals—and how well it supports you on your life’s journey.

## What is financial literacy?

Basically, financial literacy is understanding everything about money—earning it, spending it, saving it, and growing it. It’s also about using that knowledge to make smart decisions.

In sixth grade, you don’t have a job or bills to pay, but you’ve probably been given money as a gift or earned money doing chores. Developing smart spending and saving habits now will help you make smart decisions about money today, and in the years to come.

## Needs vs. wants

Whenever you’re thinking about spending your money on something, it’s important to figure out if it’s a *need* or a *want*. *Needs* are things you have to have and *wants* are things you would like to have, but can live without. Here are some examples:

- ▶ **Needs:** calculator for math class, new shoes because you outgrew your old ones, school supplies, winter coat, food
- ▶ **Wants:** tickets to a sporting event, new bike, posters for your room, video game

*Understanding the difference between needs and wants is super important for being a smart spender.*

## Spending and saving

Keeping track of how much money you have and how much you spend will help ensure that you're being smart with your money.

Here are a few smart spending tips:

- ▶ **Get a savings account.** Most banks and credit unions will allow a parent to open a savings account for a child under a certain age. This is called a *custodial account*. Banks help you keep your money safe. They may also “pay” you a small amount to keep your money there. This is called *interest*.
- ▶ **Track what you spend.** Try writing down everything you buy. This will help stop you from spending money on things you don't need or have enough money for. When you write down all of your purchases, it's easy to see how much money you have and how much you spend. You can also see how the things you buy can quickly add up.
- ▶ **Set money aside.** You never know when there will be something special you want to do or buy. When you earn or are given money, set a little bit aside. Then when something comes up, you'll already have the money—and you won't have to ask someone else for it!
- ▶ **Set savings goals.** If you have something big you want to buy, like a phone or video game, set goals for how you will earn the money. Then give yourself a set amount of time to save up for it.



*Before you make a purchase, ask yourself, “Is this something I need?” If it's not, make sure that what you're spending your money on is something that's really important to you.*



# set goals

Goals give you something to work toward. They can also help you make a plan of action. For example, if you want to go to college, there are certain things you need to do to reach that goal.

If you're not in the habit of setting goals, now is the time to start!



## Set short- and long-term goals

**Short-term goals** are ones you can achieve within days or weeks. Here are some examples of short-term goals:

*I will get a B on my next history test.*

*I will have all of my chores done by Friday.*

*I will finish my homework before dinner every day this week.*

**Long-term goals** may take weeks, months, or even years to achieve.

Here are some examples of long-term goals:

*I will get all As and Bs on my next report card.*

*I will make the basketball team in high school.*

*I will go to college and become a teacher.*

## Make your goals specific, measurable, and realistic

**Not specific** – I will do better in math.

**Specific** – I will get a B in math this semester.

**Not measurable** – I won't be so shy in class.

**Measurable** – I will raise my hand at least three times today.

**Not realistic** – I will get straight As this semester even though I usually get Cs in most of my classes.

**Realistic** – I'm going to get Bs instead of Cs in at least two of my classes.

# take care of your mind and body

While your health can be impacted by things you can't control, you can control how well you look after it. Here are some tips to help you keep your mind and body healthy and strong.

## Get enough sleep

Go to bed at a regular time each night and make sure you get at least eight hours of sleep.

## Exercise

Regular exercise helps you have a healthy body and mind. It helps you look and feel your best—and it's a natural mood-booster.

## Be grateful

Notice the things you are thankful for in your everyday life. Regularly reflect on, and feel grateful for, each of these things.

## Deal with stress

If you're feeling stressed, make a list of the things that stress you out and come up with a plan to deal with each of them.

## Open up to someone

Talk to a friend or family member when you have a problem or something is bothering you.

## Relax

Turn off all electronics and take some time every day to rest, relax, and recharge.

*For some ways to help you  
relax and feel calm,  
watch this quick video.*



# 6th Grade

**TRIO**

## **Student Guidebook**

This booklet is filled with helpful tips  
and advice to help you have  
a fun and successful 6th grade year!

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