

# SAUSALITO MARIN CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Science Standards – GRADE 6

### **Plate Tectonics and Earth's Structure**

1. Plate tectonics explains important features of the Earth's surface and major geologic events. As the basis for understanding this concept, students know:

- a. the fit of the continents, location of earthquakes, volcanoes, and midocean ridges, and the distribution of fossils, rock types, and ancient climatic zones provide evidence for plate tectonics.
- b. the solid Earth is layered with cold, brittle lithosphere; hot, convecting mantle; and dense, metallic core.
- c. lithospheric plates that are the size of continents and oceans move at rates of centimeters per year in response to movements in the mantle.
- d. earthquakes are sudden motions along breaks in the crust called faults, and volcanoes/fissures are locations where magma reaches the surface.
- e. major geologic events, such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and mountain building result from plate motions.
- f. how to explain major features of California geology in terms of plate tectonics (including mountains, faults, volcanoes).
- g. how to determine the epicenter of an earthquake and that the effects of an earthquake vary with its size, distance from the epicenter, local geology, and the type of construction involved.

### **Shaping the Earth's Surface**

2. Topography is reshaped by weathering of rock and soil and by the transportation and deposition of sediment. As the basis for understanding this concept, students know:

- a. water running downhill is the dominant process in shaping the landscape, including California's landscape.
- b. rivers and streams are dynamic systems that erode and transport sediment, change course, and flood their banks in natural and recurring patterns.
- c. beaches are dynamic systems in which sand is supplied by rivers and moved along the coast by wave action.

- d. earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, landslides, and floods change human and wildlife habitats.

### **Heat (Thermal Energy) (Physical Science)**

3. Heat moves in a predictable flow from warmer objects to cooler objects until all objects are at the same temperature. As a basis for understanding this concept, students know:

- a. energy can be carried from one place to another by heat flow, or by waves including water waves, light and sound, or by moving objects.
- b. when fuel is consumed, most of the energy released becomes heat energy.
- c. heat flows in solids by conduction (which involves no flow of matter) and in fluids by conduction and also by convection (which involves flow of matter).
- d. heat energy is also transferred between objects by radiation; radiation can travel through space.

### **Energy in the Earth System**

4. Many phenomena on the Earth's surface are affected by the transfer of energy through radiation and convection currents. As a basis for understanding this concept, students know:

- a. the sun is the major source of energy for phenomena on the Earth's surface, powering winds, ocean currents, and the water cycle.
- b. solar energy reaches Earth through radiation, mostly in the form of visible light.
- c. heat from Earth's interior reaches the surface primarily through convection.
- d. convection currents distribute heat in the atmosphere and oceans.
- e. differences in pressure, heat, air movement, and humidity result in changes of weather.

### **Ecology (Life Science)**

5. Organisms in ecosystems exchange energy and nutrients among themselves and with the environment. As a basis for understanding this concept, students know:

- a. energy entering ecosystems as sunlight is transferred by producers into chemical energy through photosynthesis, and then from organism to organism in food webs.

- b. over time, matter is transferred from one organism to others in the food web, and between organisms and the physical environment.
- c. populations of organisms can be categorized by the functions they serve in an ecosystem.
- d. different kinds of organisms may play similar ecological roles in similar biomes.
- e. the number and types of organisms an ecosystem can support depends on the resources available and abiotic factors, such as quantity of light and water, range of temperatures, and soil composition.

e. recognize whether evidence is consistent with a proposed explanation.

f. read a topographic map and a geologic map for evidence provided on the maps, and construct and interpret a simple scale map.

g. interpret events by sequence and time from natural phenomena (e.g., relative ages of rocks and intrusions).

h. identify changes in natural phenomena over time without manipulating the phenomena (e.g., a tree limb, a grove of trees, a stream, a hillslope).

## Resources

6. Sources of energy and materials differ in amounts, distribution, usefulness, and the time required for their formation. As a basis for understanding this concept, students know:

- a. the utility of energy sources is determined by factors that are involved in converting these sources to useful forms and the consequences of the conversion process.
- b. different natural energy and material resources, including air, soil, rocks, minerals, petroleum, fresh water, wildlife, and forests, and classify them as renewable or nonrenewable.
- c. natural origin of the materials used to make common objects.

## Investigation and Experimentation

7. Scientific progress is made by asking meaningful questions and conducting careful investigations. As a basis for understanding this concept, and to address the content the other three strands, students should develop their own questions and perform investigations. Students will:

- a. develop a hypothesis.
- b. select and use appropriate tools and technology (including calculators, computers, balances, spring scales, microscopes, and binoculars) to perform tests, collect data, and display data.
- c. construct appropriate graphs from data and develop qualitative statements about the relationships between variables.
- d. communicate the steps and results from an investigation in written reports and verbal presentations.