**What is GPA? – 6th Grade**

**Summary**

Students will participate in a group discussion as well as online activities to learn about GPA; they will understand its importance in high school, college and the job application process.  Students will learn how to calculate their own GPA.

**Grades**

* 6

**Content Modules**

* Building a Strong Student Profile

**Objectives**

Students will:

* Define GPA.
* Explain the importance of GPA as it relates to a student’s competitiveness on high school, college, and job applications.
* Calculate their GPA.
* Set their target GPA (e.g., semester, school year).
* Identify specific habits and skills necessary to obtain their target GPA (i.e., action plan).

**Length**

1 Session

**Additional Resources**

* [What is GPA - 6th Grade\_Calculating GPA.pdf](https://www.6to16.org/files/attachments/bb77a8154031f0ad76b0b11dc367569d.pdf)

**Related Lessons**

* [Which Student to Admit to High School?](https://www.6to16.org/lessons/view/30)

**Related E-Learning**

* [Understanding GPA](https://www.6to16.org/elearning/activities/141)
* [GPA Calculator](https://www.6to16.org/elearning/activities/165)

**Materials and Resources**

**Offline:**

* A copy of students’ most recent grades
* 6to16 Notebook
* Calculating My GPA

**Online:**

* Understanding GPA e-Learning Activity
* GPA Calculator (6to16 Online tool)

**Prep-work**

1)  If possible, obtain a copy of students’ most recent grade reports.

2)  Talk to students’ math teacher to determine whether students will need additional support to learn how to calculate a GPA.

**Higher-Level Thinking Skills**

Analysis, Comprehension

**Vocabulary**

GPA, Transcript, Projected, Cumulative

**Assessment(s)**

**GPA Calculation and Action Plan**: Students will calculate their cumulative GPA and current semester GPA. Students will also identify their target GPA and develop an action plan for attaining this GPA.

**Do Now (10 minutes)**

1)  Instruct students to answer the following questions in their **6to16 Notebooks**:

* What is GPA?
* Why is GPA important?

2)  Explain that GPA is an acronym for “grade point average”. The GPA can represent a student’s average grade for a term or over time. For example, a cumulative middle school GPA is a student’s average grade from the first semester of 6th grade to the last semester of 8th grade.

3)  Ask students the following question:

* How would you define cumulative high school GPA?

4)  Provide the following definition if a student does not:

* Cumulative high school GPA is a student’s average grade from the first semester of 9th grade to the last semester of 12th grade.

5)  Explain that GPA is important for the following reasons:

* GPA plays a key role in the admissions process for selective high schools and colleges. Along with test scores and involvement in extracurricular activities, GPA is a part of the formula schools use to evaluate a student’s readiness to attend their school.
* Potential employers may also ask students about their GPA. Employers use students’ GPA to form an initial impression of their work ethic and ability level.
* GPA can also be used to predict a student’s chances of graduating from high school and graduating from college.

**Class Activity (35 minutes)**

1)  Project the **Understanding GPA e-Learning Activity**. This activity introduces the concept of a grade point average. Students practice calculating GPA for fictional students and determine the grades needed to achieve the target GPA.

**Teacher’s Note:** *The steps below are covered in the online presentation:* ***Understanding GPA* e-Learning Activity***, but may be revisited as appropriate.*

**Teacher’s Note:***You may reference the following table as necessary when showing students how to calculate GPAs on a 4.0 scale.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Grade** |  | **4.0 scale** |
| A |  | 4.0 |
| A- |  | 3.7 |
| B+ |  | 3.3 |
| B |  | 3.0 |
| B- |  | 2.7 |
| C+ |  | 2.3 |
| C |  | 2.0 |
| C- |  | 1.7 |
| D+ |  | 1.3 |
| D |  | 1.0 |
| F |  | 0.0 |

2)  How is GPA calculated? Explain that each grade has a corresponding number that is used to calculate the average grade.  On a four point scale, an A is 4.0, a B is 3.0, etc.

3)  Provide students with the following example:

* Michael received the following grades in each of 6 classes.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Class** | **Grade** |  | **4.0 scale** |
| English | B |  | 3.0 |
| Math | B+ |  | 3.3 |
| Science | C |  | 2.0 |
| Gym | A |  | 4.0 |
| Spanish | C |  | 2.0 |
| History | A- |  | 3.7 |

4)  Ask the class the following question:

* How would you determine Michael’s GPA?

5)  Call on a student to answer the question. A complete answer would include the following:

* To determine his GPA, add the numeric values for each grade (i.e., 3.0 + 3.3 + 2.0 + 4.0 + 2.0 + 3.7 = 18.0) and then divide the total by the number of classes (i.e., 18/6 = 3).  Michael’s GPA for this semester is 3.0, which is a B average.

6)  Check for understanding by asking the following:

* Let’s now assume that these are Michael’s mid-semester grades.  What would Michael’s end-of-semester GPA be if he raised his grade in Spanish from a C (2.0) to a B (3.0)?

7)  Give students several minutes to perform the calculation.

8)  Call on a student to share her or his answer with the class.

9)  Model the calculation for students on the board to review with students how the calculation is made.

10)  Provide as many examples as you would like until you have the sense that students have correctly grasped the calculation.

11)  Ask students the following question:

* What are some things that you would advise Michael to do to increase his GPA?

12)  Discuss any unique factors to consider when calculating GPA that apply to your school (e.g., 5 point scale, weighted grades for AP classes in high school, etc.)  Explain how this affects the calculation process.

13)  Explain that a student’s GPA is documented on his or her official academic transcript. A transcript is an official school document that records grades for each class a student has taken..  When students apply to high school or college they must submit an official transcript. Transcripts are often requested when applying for summer programs, internships, and jobs.

**Calculating GPA Exercise**

1)  Direct students to the **GPA Calculator** online tool.  They may work independently or in pairs depending on availability of computers and concerns about privacy (i.e., sharing GPA info).

2)  Distribute the **Calculating My GPA** worksheet.

3)  Read the directions on the worksheet to the students. Tell the students to ask for help if they are having trouble calculating their GPA.

4)  When the students have finished the worksheet, tell them to record their (projected) first semester and second semester GPA’s in their **6to16 Notebooks**.

5)  Emphasize that students shoud use the skills they learned to keep track of their GPA.

6)  Ask students what they could do to raise their grades in their current and future courses. Posible answers may include the following:

* Turn in 100% of my homework assignments on time.
* Maintain an attendance record as close to 100% as possible.
* Ask teachers for extra help when I have difficulty with a particular concept.
* Spend at least 15 minutes a day studying for each of my subjects.
* Study with a friend or a group.

**Homework**

1)  Instruct students to finish the **Calculating My GPA** worksheet at home.

2)  Instruct students to answer the following questions in their **6to16 Notebooks**:

* What is your target GPA for middle school?
* What is your target GPA for high school?
* What study and homework habits will you implement to help you achieve your target GPA?

**Additional Activities**

1)  Suggest that students research the average GPA for their target high school or college.

2)  Younger students could create posters that visually demonstrate the benefits of good grades. (e.g., the high school or college they will go to, the long-term career benefits, etc.)

3)  Encourage students to reuse the **GPA calculator** on an ongoing basis to figure out their semester and cumulative GPAs.

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