

The American School in London

Grade 4: Semester 2 Curriculum Guide

By the end of the second reporting period, these are the ideas, concepts, and skills your child will have learned. We acknowledge that all children learn at different paces, and that it takes the students different lengths of time to master skills and concepts.

Approaches to Learning

We expect students in Grade 4 to accept responsibility for their own actions. We value cooperation and attentive listening to directions from the teacher and the ideas of other classmates. The development of a consistently organized approach to work is fostered throughout the year. We expect work of a consistent quality that reflects thoughtful practice with a focus on the attainment of self-reflective skills.

Reading

Students participate in a multi-genre Reader's Workshop. They practice a variety of reading strategies to deepen their comprehension. These include: identifying main idea and supporting details in nonfiction, summarizing, making connections, inferring, predicting, formulating questions and analyzing character. Students should be able to select just-right books independently and read for 30 to 45 minutes. They learn to become metacognitive readers and to record and discuss their thoughts about texts. At the end of Grade 4, students meeting expectations are reading books at a Fountas and Pinnell level of S/T.

Writing

Using the Writer's Workshop model, students are led through a process of planning, drafting, revising, editing, publishing, and sharing their work. Whole class mini-lessons teach students specific writing strategies in two genres: essay and information writing. Students consider their audience and think of the purpose of their writing. During our essay-writing unit, students focus on stating a claim and supporting it with evidence. Our information-writing unit gives students the opportunity to write about a topic they have researched, linked to our Social Studies Power unit. Students learn to teach others by sharing main ideas in an organized way, developing details to support their ideas. They learn to provide evidence and to cite sources. Student/teacher writing conferences provide an opportunity for individualized instruction based on the students' needs.

Speaking and Listening

Grade 4 students practice speaking and listening across disciplines to reinforce, build upon and share their learning. Students use eye contact and respond appropriately throughout a discussion. They are expected to be able to follow multi-step instructions independently. Opportunities to speak in small and large groups help students gain confidence as speakers. They share their ideas and experiences in an organized fashion while using appropriate body language and gestures.

Math

The Grade 4 math curriculum is aligned to the Common Core State Standards, with an emphasis on sense making, reasoning, problem solving, and flexible thinking. Students develop efficient strategies to tackle complex problems and work to explain their mathematical thinking fully and clearly. In Semester 2, students develop a range of strategies for multi-digit multiplication and division while applying their knowledge of factors to differentiate between prime and composite numbers. Students engage in hands-on experiences with manipulatives to deepen their understanding of equivalent fractions and develop models to represent and solve fraction addition and subtraction problems. They extend this thinking to apply these skills to the concept of multiplying fractions by whole numbers. In these fraction units, students work with denominators of 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12 and 100. Students explore connections between fractions and decimals as they are introduced to the concept of decimals to the tenths and hundredths place.

Social Studies

In social studies, students continue to focus on how power, perspective and conflict shape the past and present. Seeing the past through the lens of power helps students understand imbalances today. Students use primary and secondary sources to examine inequalities in power, specifically during the British empire. The end of the year focuses on how to empower groups.

Science

Grade 4 students use the scientific practices of developing models and analyzing and interpreting data to provide evidence to construct an argument. Through a consideration of cause and effect, students consider Earth's natural processes such as rock formation and fossil layers, and show that impacts of processes such as erosion can be reduced by design. Students will generate and compare multiple solutions. During the Life unit, students explore patterns in organism senses to consider internal and external structures which support growth and survival. Students will provide evidence to support the claim that animals receive different types of information, process this in their brain, and respond in different ways.

Art

This semester, Grade 4 students use a variety of materials to continue developing their appreciation of 3D art and the creation of the realistic drawing. Students also continue to use paint as they develop observational techniques to make compositions appear to be 3D. Students analyze components in visual imagery that convey messages and organize a 'pop up' gallery as they respond to different interpretations of the same object. They compare and contrast the purposes of art galleries and other venues, as well as the types of personal experiences they bring to them as artists.

Music

This semester Grade 4 students work on developing their performance skills by preparing and presenting a musical. Students perform a number of songs and dances as well as learning some basic acting skills with the main objective being to connect with their audience. Students continue to develop their singing skills as the semester progresses along with their understanding of the basic elements of music. With the introduction of hand chimes last semester, the students will continue to develop their ringing technique while reading from a large scale score. Students are also introduced to the ukulele, learning a number of chords and strumming patterns and simple songs. As well as playing together as a class ensemble, students work in small groups and with partners on many activities including creating their own short composition.

PE

Grade 4 students work together in personal and cooperative games that deepen their understanding of the “Big C’s” of sport; cooperation, care, compromise, challenge, celebration and commitment. Students participate in activities that build on more mature locomotor and manipulative skills in activities such as modified striking/fielding and net games. This helps develop students’ understanding of movement concepts, principles, strategies and tactics. Students self-assess and peer assess to improve their skills and play games demonstrating collaboration, responsibility, and respect. Students also continue to develop their dance skills, learning to replicate, adapt, link and create sequential movement skills. A large focus in the second semester is increasing understanding of fitness and personal health through preparation and participation in the ASL “Aquathon” - a fun race completed as an individual involving an 800m run and a 300m swim. Students also have the opportunity to consider how diet, sleep, and mood affects their performance of physical activities.

Spanish

This semester, Grade 4 students continue to use their speaking and listening skills in a rehearsed way: working with partners at the different learning centers around the classroom, recording videos to share with a wider audience. Each center engages the students with a different language task, emphasizing the use of the oral language and challenging their presentational and interpersonal speaking skills. Students will also engage in a variety of activities covering cultural aspects of the target language, spelling, pronunciation, reading, and writing for beginners.