

Lower School Curriculum

4th Grade

Language Arts

In fourth grade, students write more detailed stories, poems, short compositions, and responses to questions. They are expected to apply spelling and grammar conventions when writing. Rough drafts are turned into polished pieces of writing by editing, revising, and rewriting either by hand or using technology.

Students will be exposed to a variety of literary genres, while also using grade-level novel studies to expand vocabulary and comprehension. They will be expected to read on grade level or above, comparing ideas; comprehending and interpreting the meaning of text; discussing the author's purpose; evaluating text by considering personal experience and from other's viewpoint; and, developing an understanding of similarities and differences in format and styles among the genres. Students will be encouraged to read one book per month for pleasure.

Mathematics

In mathematics, students continue to employ higher level thinking skills with an emphasis on the continued development of computational skills, as they learn to understand and apply math content. Fluent memorization and recall of multiplication facts are essential to students. Numeral relationships are explored using whole numbers, fractions, and decimals. The estimation of time and measurement continue to be presented. Lines, rays, and measurement angles are introduced in geometry. Place value is expanded to include numbers to the millions and decimals to the thousandths. The course guides the students to gather, organize, and interpret statistical data for calculating mean, median, and mode.

Social Studies

The focus in fourth grade is on the four core social sciences: history, geography, economics, and political science as applied to the regions of the United States: Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, Southwest, and the West. This course also covers the first Americans, as well as how the Spanish, Europeans, Asians, Africans, and other immigrants influenced the history of the United States. Fourth grade social studies concludes with an in-depth unit on Georgia.

Art

Students will add more refined detail to their artwork, reflecting their skill and ability level. They will recognize the uses of the elements of art and the principles of design in nature and manufactured objects. Students will become more critical of their own artwork, so exceptional care is given to everyone. Students will use aesthetic judgment in art history. Subject matter is focused on the individual child and his/her world.

Drama

In drama, students expand upon previous work and experience, analyzing and constructing meaning of the human experience through imagined roles and situations. The nature of drama classes reflects students' daily lives, as they connect with others, experience tension, resolve conflict, and create meaning in their world. Through structured dramatic play, they gain insight into life experiences, team building, body awareness, and confidence. Students put on a play each year and assume roles executing artistic and technical elements of theater.

Innovation

In fourth grade Innovation, students apply measurement concepts to problem solving situations with the goal of fostering greater quantitative reasoning and creative thought. Students are exposed to the design process and complete a variety of STEM projects, including robotics challenges and simple circuitry.

Library

The mission of the library is to encourage curiosity and to support instruction through collaboration with classroom teachers. Fourth grade students review how to use the online catalog to search for a book and how to put a book on hold. They continue to define and explore various genres, including folktales, fables, and fairy tales. Dictionary and thesaurus skills are reinforced. The students continue to develop and practice their beginning research skills.

Music

The fourth grade music curriculum continues with a more specified study of fundamental musicianship and basic literacy skills through singing, Orff Xylophones,

African drumming, hand bells, spoons, and multicultural folk dance, while creating, performing, reading, and responding to music. In addition, further enrichment of the arts is provided to learn the basics of strings and brass through unique whole-class programming. The fourth grade music curriculum continues to develop insights, awareness, and appreciation of people and cultures represented in our world and communities. Students perform in various programs throughout the year. Performances are viewed as an active process, involving the development and application of musical skills, knowledge, and perceptions.

Physical Education

Exercising to develop strength, coordination, and endurance is practiced daily. Basic skills for learning to play various sports are taught in large and small group environments. Fitness tests that include flexibility, upper body strength, abdominal strength, agility, and cardiovascular endurance are tested twice yearly. All locomotor movements and variations are expected to be mastered by fourth grade. Students will identify and exercise eight major muscles of the body throughout the year. Students are exposed to tracking heart rate while participating in high energy activities.

Science

Each of the three branches of science (physical, life, & earth) is covered in a hands-on, minds-on format using the scientific method. Students explore light and sound as forms of energy for physical science. Life science involves the study of animal adaptations and human body systems. A study of geological and astronomical concepts rounds out earth science. Nature walks throughout the school year help the students hone their scientific observation skills.

Spanish

The overall objectives of Spanish in fourth grade are to develop and reinforce communicative competency in listening, speaking, writing and culture. Students will gain an intuitive understanding of how the language is acquired and how they can use this knowledge to express themselves linguistically. By developing and refining their intuitive skills, students also acquire a basic understanding and appreciation of the diversity of cultures in the Spanish-speaking world. While the focus is not on fluently speaking Spanish, students will begin to develop competency and comfort, conversing in Spanish with their teacher and peers, using brief phrases and sentences.

Technology

Students are issued a device to use in the classroom. They are taught to care for their device, keeping it

charged so it is ready to use when needed. Students may use their device at their teacher's discretion to complete in-class assignments and to work on programs to reinforce basic math facts and skills. Students may also use their devices to do some basic research for projects.

In Technology class, students are taught how to use digital tools to communicate thoughts and ideas with creativity and innovation. Students will also engage in critical thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making activities to strengthen these skills. The concept of Digital Citizenship will also be expanded upon as students have access to technology on a more regular basis. Students come to understand that having access to a device is a privilege and creates a digital footprint, and they must be mindful of what they put in writing.