

Grade Four, Grade Five, and Grade Six Curriculum Overview

2010-2011

4/5/6 Team Philosophy Statement: In fourth, fifth and sixth grades, students build upon their love of learning and are eager for more responsibility. The team's aim is to nurture their skills in academics, athletics and the arts as we guide them toward becoming organized and independent learners. We coach and encourage our students to fully engage, to have the confidence to take risks, to express themselves creatively throughout the rich and diverse curriculum, and to be both leaders and good citizens.

	Grade Four Experience	Grade Five Experience	Grade Six Experience
Inter-Disciplinary Units of Study	Medieval Europe and Asia, Castles, Women in Science, and Fountain projects.	Mesoamerican studies, Claymation, Cloud forest, and Bird study in Spanish.	The Middle Passage, Immigration, The Renaissance, The 5 Es: Evidence, Ecosystem, Evolution, Endangered, Extinction, and The Industrial Revolution.
Critical Skills Developed Across the Curriculum	Organizational skills, Managing time, Working as part of a group, Developing character and citizenship, Leadership, Self-advocacy, Reading, Writing, Revising, Editing, Solving problems, Research, and Presenting information.	Organizing work and long-term projects, Collaborating with peers, Developing character and citizenship, Critical reading, Making inferences, Asking questions, Conducting research, Developing writing skills and editing skills, Solving problems, Interpreting data, and Presenting and sharing information.	Organizing and pacing work, Collaborating with peers, Developing character and citizenship, Analyzing sources of information, Conducting research, Inferring from evidence, Writing creatively and technically, Solving problems, Learning via revision of work, Developing language learning skills, and Creating and giving presentations.

Subject Area Highlights

Drama	<p>Overarching Question: <i>How does Drama help us with self-esteem, confidence and communication?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Mime, Pantomime, Video Acting/Production, Play Production</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Using face, body and voice to communicate characters, actions and ideas; Note taking from dictation, Rehearsing, Memorizing, Performing, Developing audience etiquette, Working cooperatively in small and large groups, Taking on the roles of camera director and technician, and Performing for the camera and a live audience.</p>	<p>Overarching Question: <i>How does puppetry affect our communication and enhance fine motor skills?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Study of the six major puppet types, Hand puppets with Aesop's fables, Shadow puppets with nursery rhymes, and Marionettes with familiar children's stories.</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Note taking from dictation, Constructing and manipulating puppets, Voice production, Using the voice to create characters, Transforming nursery rhymes into puppet plays, Rehearsing, Memorizing, Performing, and Working cooperatively in a group.</p>	<p>Overarching Question: <i>How does Drama give us the skills to appreciate Shakespeare?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Reading, dissecting, and performing scenes from Shakespeare's A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Taking direction, Memorizing and performing Shakespeare while incorporating the techniques of dramatic acting and comic timing.</p>
Health	<p>Overarching Question: <i>How can we use health information to practice a healthy lifestyle?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Nutrition, Healthy self-image, Hand Washing, Introduction to puberty, and Healthy emotions.</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Critical thinking, Understanding the connection between nutrition and health, and Learning positive ways to deal with emotions of all types.</p>	<p>Overarching Question: <i>How can we use health education to make responsible choices for our health and well-being?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: The Health Triangle, Critically Reading Nutrition Labels, Legal and illegal drugs, Substance abuse, Puberty, First Aid</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Reflecting on their own health, Being able to critically examine nutrition labels, Understanding the emotional and physical changes of puberty, and Developing research and presentation skills.</p>	<p>Overarching Question: <i>How can we use our knowledge of health to promote our optimal well-being?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Learning Styles, Self-awareness, Healthy self-image, Positive relationships, and Human reproduction.</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Awareness of individual learning styles and what conditions and methods are best for an individual to learn, Increasing self-awareness, Understanding the emotional and physical changes of puberty, and Learning the science of how babies are created and develop.</p>

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Humanities & Writing Workshop	<p>Overarching Questions: <i>How do we obtain meaning from what we read? How can we organize, revise and edit our writing to communicate most effectively? How can we effectively advocate for ourselves based on our learning styles and needs? What were the defining features of the Middle Ages in Europe and in other parts of the world? How did issues of class/power structures in societies impact life in the Middle Ages? How do they impact life today?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Advocacy, The Middle Ages, The Feudal System, Women in Medieval Europe, Castles, The Crusades, Medieval Korea, and Multicultural Cinderella stories.</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Descriptive writing, Journal writing, First-person narrative writing, Writing mechanics, Spelling, Parts of speech, Historical fiction, Cursive, Reading for main idea and detail, Planning, Revising, Proofreading, Writing coherent paragraphs, Building vocabulary, Interpreting time lines and maps, Using MediaBlender, Research, Poetry, and Using AlphaSmarts and graphic organizers.</p>	<p>Overarching Questions: <i>What strategies can we use to better understand the literature that we read? How can we understand history from more than one perspective?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Early history of the Americas: Mayan civilization, Colonial America, The American Revolution.</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Drawing inferences, Building vocabulary, Exploring themes, Developing character, Improving grammar/spelling, Furthering our understanding of the writing process: drafting, editing, revising, Writing in different genres: creative, descriptive, expository, journal, Conducting research using nonfiction texts, Differentiating main and subordinate ideas, Taking notes, Incorporating research into writing, Reading and understanding maps, and Organizing long-term projects.</p>	<p>Overarching Questions: <i>How do we connect the past with the present? How do we communicate our ideas clearly through writing? How can we best revise our writing?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Africans in America, Abolitionism, The Industrial Revolution, Women in the labor movement, African slave trade, The Civil War, The Renaissance, and Immigration.</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Analyzing literature, Examining figurative language, Drawing connections between past and present, Creative writing: fiction, poetry, and essays, Writing five paragraph essays, Debating, Deciphering primary source documents, Organizational skills, Critical reading for content and bias, Writing responses to literature, Writing biographies, Grammar review, Spelling, and Building vocabulary.</p>
Library	<p>Overarching Question: <i>How can questioning help us find the answers we want? How can we use information gathered in research and share it in multiple formats?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Building the “Best” Castle - an integrated and co-taught unit that lays the foundation of skills for all research. Bringing Famous Medieval Women to life- through story - an interactive waxwork museum.</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Finding books and other resources, how to ask questions in order to find answers, how to use keywords to sift information, how to use different tools within text to find information, how to take notes. How to identify important information in a biography How to present information orally in a clear and engaging story.</p>	<p>Overarching Question: <i>How does the library enrich our lives? How do we evaluate information?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Literary genres (including historical fiction, fantasy, science fiction, mysteries and more.), Finding and evaluating information in books and websites, Citing sources properly, using NoodleTools. Healthy Library research unit.</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Finding books and other resources, Research skills: finding and evaluating information, asking questions, citing sources, Listening for content, Presenting books orally, and Reading for pleasure.</p>	<p>Use of the library in Grade Six is incorporated into subject area classes. Library and Information Literacy skills in the sixth grade focus on citing sources (what is plagiarism and how to avoid it), using NoodleTools to create works-cited lists and electronic notecards; finding and using the most appropriate resources for research using online databases, books, reference sources and the Internet.</p> <p>The new 6th grade Media Literacy course focuses on nontraditional forms of literacy: reading, interpreting and comprehending graphic images (maps, charts, photographs, video and audio). In the spring, the course will focus on developing skills for reading for information and notetaking.</p>

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Mathematics	<p>Overarching Question: <i>What do mathematicians do to solve problems successfully?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Place value to millions, Review of math facts and computation, Data, Graphs, Probability, Multiplication, Division, Fractions, Decimals, Percents, and Geometry.</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Solidifying automaticity with math facts, Estimating, Analyzing story problems and using appropriate strategies to solve them, Analyzing graphs, Finding mean, mode and median, Interpreting remainders, Adding and subtracting fractions, Comparing fractions, decimals, and percents, and Finding area and perimeter, Identifying 3D solids .</p>	<p>Overarching Question: <i>How can we use our math skills and concepts to live in our world?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Factors and multiples, Addition, Subtraction, Multiplication and division of fractions and decimals, 2-D Geometry, Symmetry, Probability, Fractions, Decimals, and Percents.</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Comparing and ordering decimals and fractions, Solving multistep problems using multiple operations, Recognizing the omnipresence of math, Learning about a variety of number systems, Calculating the area and perimeter of various shapes and structures, Using technology to explain Geometry, and Discovering strategies to play ancient games from around the world.</p>	<p>Overarching Question: <i>How may I use math models to organize and make sense of real world information?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Looking at Data, Using graphs, What is “typical?”, Concepts and operations with decimals, Understanding similar shapes, Proportional reasoning: Ratio, Proportion and Percent, Concepts and operations with Integers, Variables, and Patterns.</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Finding mean, median and mode of data, Creating graphical representations, Converting among multiple forms of representing rational numbers, Computing with fractions, decimals and percents, Using similar figures and scaling, Using number lines to understand integers and their operations, Order of operations, Expressing patterns and change using variables, Deciding when answers are “reasonable”, and Developing problem solving strategies.</p>
Music	<p>Overarching Question: <i>How can we discover the role of music in our lives?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Drumming, Handbells, Sharing songs and memories, Folk dancing, Rhythm reading, Winter Concert, and Music from many cultures.</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Identifying notes on the treble staff, Reading & performing music, Critical listening, Counting beats & measures, Memorizing music, Working as an ensemble/team, & Introduction to musical instruments with demonstrations by professional musicians.</p>	<p>Overarching Question: <i>How can we appreciate how music is created and become better musicians?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Composing ballads, Review of music notation, Multicultural music, Handbells, Composers, Folk dancing, Drumming, Women in music, and Ballads.</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Composing, Recognizing patterns and musical form, Learning and memorizing songs, Moving rhythmically, Using appropriate singing technique, Writing lyrics to fit a given rhyme scheme, and Researching historical facts for class presentation.</p>	<p>Overarching Question: <i>What does folk music teach us about our world?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Silk Road music, Research on folk music of countries around the world, Civil War songs, and Renaissance music and culture.</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Research and presentation skills, Presenting more advanced hand bells music, Identifying and naming notes, Learning and memorizing songs, Singing technique, and Relating music to history.</p>
Physical Education	<p>Overarching Question: <i>How do we become team players?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Field Hockey, Fitness testing, Badminton, Basketball, Gymnastics, Lacrosse, Track and Field, Character education, Water</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Basic stick and racket skills, Dribbling and shooting, Catching, passing and scooping with lacrosse stick, Recognize and correct offensive tactical problems, Create a movement sequence with a partner, Sprinting, distance running Hurdling, long jump, relay, Recognize key components of teamwork. Understanding differences, and a sense of fair play, Recognize water’s role in exercise.</p>	<p>Overarching Questions: <i>How do I become a leader and a follower?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Field Hockey, Fitness testing, Pickle-Ball, Basketball, Tinikling, Gymnastics, Track and Field, Softball, Character education</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Continue developing sport skills. Become aware and of defensive tactics. Convert singles into doubles play, Throwing catching, fielding, batting, Perform rhythmic dance with classmates, Solidifying role of leader and team play, Understanding of how to address conflicts on the field.</p>	<p>Overarching Question: <i>As we continue to explore new physical activities, how is our quest for personal growth and fitness impacted?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Cooperative activities, Speedball, Fitness, Volleyball, Net Ball, Gymnastics, Renaissance games and dances, Softball, Create a Game, Media portrayal of the female athlete, Track and Field.</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Convert ball in speedball, Pass & set, Recreate Renaissance games & dances, Create movement sequences in gymnastics, Sprint, hurdle & jump for distance, Learn skills & rules for Netball, Hit grounders, Place hits & prevent scoring in softball, Use knowledge of motor, & locomotor movement, equipment & strategies to create a game for a specific grade.</p>

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Science	<p>Overarching Question: <i>How do we, as scientists, investigate cycles and patterns in the world around us?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Water cycle, Human water use, Erosion, Flowering plants, Circulatory and Respiratory systems, Introduction to robotics, and Women in Science</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Observing accurately, Gathering and analyzing information from different sources, Recording and organizing data, Making inferences, Using scientific vocabulary, Solving design challenges, and Creating experimental procedures.</p>	<p>Overarching Question: <i>How do we, as scientists, collaborate to learn more about the world around us?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Pond study, Soils, Classification of herbs, birds and trees, Field observations, Introduction to matter, Animal behavior, Design engineering, Metric system, and Inventions from many cultures.</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Classifying, Recognizing patterns, Developing a science vocabulary, Following lab directions, Sketching, Using the Metric system, Asking questions, Sharing results and Collaborating.</p>	<p>Overarching Questions: <i>How do we, as scientists, know what is true? How do we search for the truth?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Science in society, Scientific inquiry, Cells, Botany, Origin of Life, Evolution and extinction, Human body systems, Classification, and Ecology, with an emphasis on Marine Ecology</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Developing a science vocabulary, Formulating questions, Making scientific predictions/hypotheses, Collaborating to design experiments, Identifying variables, Designing and building models, Making observations, Analyzing evidence, Drawing conclusions, Sharing results via lab reports and presentations, and Critical evaluation of how science is represented in our society.</p>
Spanish	<p style="text-align: center;">Spanish</p> <p>Overarching Question: <i>What makes a culture rich? How can learning about Spanish language cultures enrich our own experiences?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Greetings and introductions, People and actions/ activities, Food/Animals/Things and more actions/ activities, Spain, <i>El día de los muertos</i>, <i>El día de acción de gracias</i>, and <i>El cinco de mayo</i>.</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Reciting the alphabet, Following directions, Asking/responding to questions, Reading and pronouncing words and phrases, Understanding and applying grammatical concepts, Holding a basic conversation and describing what people are doing, Singing songs, Creating and performing mini-skits, Integrating technology through projects and Rosetta Stone, Making and decorating Latin American crafts.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Spanish</p> <p>Overarching Questions: <i>As Spanish speakers, how do we increase our understanding of the world around us? How can Spanish help us to understand and communicate with others throughout the world?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Nature and colors/descriptions, Professions and actions using both forms of “to be” and gerunds, Clothing/Things around the home, Mexico, <i>El día de los muertos</i>, <i>El día de acción de gracias</i>, and <i>El cinco de mayo</i>.</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Following verbal/written instructions, Holding a basic conversation and talking about basic surroundings, Reading and writing short passages and skits, Singing songs, Working in a team to produce a talk show, Supporting and communicating with a sponsored friend, Reading and reciting poetry, Integrating technology through projects and Rosetta Stone, Making and decorating Latin American crafts.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Spanish</p> <p>Overarching Questions: <i>How does the study of Spanish help me better understand and communicate with others locally and globally? How does it help me learn geography and about language structure?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Basic greetings, Introducing and describing self and others, Concept of noun gender, Present and near future tenses, Irregular verbs, Connecting words, Negative structures, Adjective agreement, Question words, Articles, Tener idioms, House and school life, Spanish speaking countries, Poems, Renaissance in Spain, and Romance languages.</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Writing and revising, Presenting self and others, Soliciting information, Building vocabulary, Creating and reciting poetry, Developing oral fluency, integrating technology in projects (animation, iMovie, Rosetta Stone, Textbook CD-ROM program).</p>

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Technology	<p>Overarching Question: <i>How can technology support and enhance student learning?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Word Processing, Internet safety, Geography, Women in Science, Math, Logo programming and Animation.</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Saving & printing to desired locations, Using the student server, Keyboarding, Problem solving, Creating multimedia presentations, Using graphic organization software, Creating animations, Using drawing and painting tools and Internet research.</p>	<p>Overarching Question: <i>How can we best use technology to demonstrate/illustrate what we have learned?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: MediaBlender, Word Processing, AlphaSmarts, iMovie, Drawing programs, PhotoShop, Animation, Timeliner, Fitnessgram, and PowerPoint.</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Group research, Creating and Presenting MediaBlender projects, Using iMovie for animation, Writing stories, poems and diaries, Using Inspiration, Keyboarding, Math programs, Creating time lines, and Manipulating images.</p>	<p>Overarching Question: <i>How can we best use technology as a resource and tool to demonstrate what we have learned in the grade six curriculum?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Fitnessgram, Immigration, Labor Movement Unit, Critically reviewing internet sources, Creating Pop art in Adobe Photoshop, Filming short movies in Spanish, and Using interactive CD-ROM's.</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Creating and presenting projects with Smartboards, PowerPoint presentations, Researching on the Internet, Creating web pages, Adobe Photoshop for animation and still images, Creating videos and using Pinnacle Studio for editing, Using the microscope, and Word processing.</p>
Visual Arts	<p>Overarching Question: <i>How can we use art as a tool and a means to communicate?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Collage portrait, Painting and color mixing, Observational and imaginative drawing, Clay, cardboard, and found object sculpture.</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Drawing lines, shapes and value. Drawing objects from nature, Portraiture, Color mixing, Illustrating, and Sculpting.</p>	<p>Overarching Question: <i>How are the arts used as a tool and a means to communicate?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Clay figures, Observational and imaginative drawing, Mayan designs, Mezo-American art, Mask making, Shadow puppets, Cardboard and plaster as sculptural materials.</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Sculpting clay, Observational and imaginative drawing, Recognizing patterns, Sculpting with cardboard, plaster, and found objects, Color mixing with tempera and acrylic paint.</p>	<p>Overarching Question: <i>How can we look at the past and create our own artwork from our observations?</i></p> <p>Sampling of Topics of Study: Quilt design based on the quilts of Gee's Bend, and symbols from the Underground Railroad, Renaissance Art, Extinct organism sculptures, Artist in residence, Still life observational drawings, and Contemporary artist study.</p> <p>Key Skills Taught: Drawing and painting using value. Using shape in design, Using additive and subtractive building techniques with clay sculpture, Mixing colors, and Looking for and using symbols in art.</p>