



TMS Grade and Subject-Specific Curriculum Guide

Lower School First through Sixth Grade

First and Second Grade

First and Second Grade Language Arts:

Approaches to Teaching and Learning:

The first and second-grade classroom encourages a culture of appreciative readers and confident writers. The goals of the program include building reading and writing skills, communicating clearly, and listening well. Children practice language arts daily through targeted activities that focus on the building blocks of literacy such as word work (spelling/sight word practice), reading independently, developing reading strategies through direct instruction, and work on essential writing skills. These activities are also integrated into the science and social studies units of study and are not limited to the language arts reading. Thus, reading and written language are integrated across the curriculum and are relevant to children's studies and interests. To accommodate the range of abilities within the class, the teacher differentiates instruction with various strategies based on both Orton Gillingham and Montessori models, student-directed work, and buddy reading.

Reading: Reading instruction includes a blend of the best developmentally appropriate approaches for literacy. Using strategies based on the Orton Gillingham model, new readers build on their foundation in sound-symbol correspondence and gain familiarity with new phonograms, while more experienced readers increase their awareness of more complex word patterns. The teacher encourages children to decode new words using their phonetic skills; however, young readers also use prediction, context, and pictorial clues to help them derive meaning from texts. Using meaningful books spanning various literary forms, the teacher emphasizes comprehension strategies such as asking thoughtful questions, making predictions, gathering main ideas from the text, mental imaging, and employing schemata to help children enjoy and understand literature.

Writing: Writing instruction is a combination of handwriting instruction, Montessori grammar lessons, and writers workshops. Students solidify their skills with manuscript writing and practice cursive letter formation and connections. In writer's workshops, students learn to compose different writing genres such as narratives, opinion papers, expository, and research papers. The workshop model takes students through the whole writing process, from generating ideas to drafting, revising, editing, and publishing student work. Within this model, students are instructed on essential grammar skills and basic writing conventions. Students write for various audiences and purposes and understand the importance of crafting clear, coherent, and creative work.

Spelling: Spelling practice follows the Orton Gillingham guide to systematic progression through the Sound-Spelling checklist. This includes the opportunity to apply phonetic principles, learn about word families and patterns, and master grade-level sight words. Children use the Montessori grammar symbols and grammar boxes to understand the functions of the nine parts of speech and to diagram and construct simple sentences. Vocabulary practice is integrated into reading, discussions, and unit studies. As with other skill work, the teacher individualizes the student's learning program for spelling, grammar, handwriting, and vocabulary development to provide challenge or extra practice where needed.

A-Year Content and Themes:

- Units of Study First Grade: Units 1--Small Moments (Narrative writing); Unit 3--Shoebox Collection (Opinion writing)
- Gingerbread Stories: Comparing/contrasting story elements, Character Traits, Fractured Fairy Tales
- Nonfiction Writing: Earth Changes Research Paper (science integrated paper); Immersion Research Paper (Native American Tribes of SW Colorado).
- Montessori Lessons: Schema, Summarizing, Mental Imaging, and Inferring

B-Year Content and Themes:

- Haunted house stories (Imaginative writing)
- Family Stories/Folk tales (Historical Fiction & Narrative writing)
- Lucy Calkins First Grade: Unit 2: Nonfiction Chapter Books (Animal research)
- Immersion Writing: Dinosaurs
- Montessori Lessons: Schema, Summarizing, Mental Imaging, and Inferring

First and Second Grade Social Studies:**Approaches to Teaching and Learning:**

The first and second-grade social studies curriculum incorporates history, geography, economics, and civics into cross-curricular integrated units. Students examine timelines and chronological order concepts as they explore local Telluride history, considering how the community and culture have transformed over time. They look at family and cultural traditions from a prehistoric and modern standpoint as they study Native Americans of SW Colorado and their place within their family and community. Students explore and use geographical tools such as maps and globes to gain a broader sense of where they are in the world. They also learn how to be responsible members of their community and resolve conflicts in multiple ways through social-emotional lessons and experiences.

A-Year Content and Themes: Local history

The A-year begins with a unit on Telluride history and mining. The class takes advantage of the Telluride Historical Museum and participates in field trips to explore local mining sites. The year ends with a unit on the Ancestral Puebloan culture and other Native American groups of SW Colorado that culminates with an experiential learning trip. Local studies encourage children to discover their place in the universe while instilling a moral responsibility to maintain and improve our surroundings and world.

B-Year Content and Themes: Family, Culture, and Community

In B-year, students explore more closely their place within their family and the broader community. They take an in-depth look at their own family culture and traditions and compare them to the wider world. This study integrates an exploration of local plant communities and the diverse biomes that surround them. Respect for all things, both living and not, is emphasized.

Age-appropriate activities, reading, and writing exercises accompany each topic, while opportunities for child-based research empower students to question, think critically, observe, and make their own conclusions. Students participate in cartography skills, writing group big books on their topic of study, and ultimately, produce beautiful Immersion projects.

First and Second Grade Mathematics:**Approaches to Teaching and Learning:**

The first and second-grade classroom emphasizes the Montessori hands-on approach to learning new mathematical concepts, daily practice of basic math facts, and problem-solving skills. Students often work with their classmates to share and solidify their understanding and the teacher in the multi-age classroom. Instruction is differentiated through several strategies, including individualized lesson plans, individual and small group instruction, peer-mentoring, self-directed activities, and choice work. The Montessori progression promotes clear thinking, effective communication of mathematical ideas, and adept problem solving to develop the mathematical foundations for more advanced mathematics.

First Grade Content and Skills

First and second-grade students build their understanding of quantity, the decimal system, numeric operations, and geometric and mathematical principles with the Montessori materials, which provide concrete experiences that

continue to be essential to their learning. As their understanding deepens, students begin work with more abstract representations of mathematical concepts and move towards paper and pencil. Children progress through concrete, pictorial, and abstract representations of mathematical ideas as their understanding deepens, and they develop the ability to think abstractly and work more exclusively with symbols.

Second Grade Content and Skills

Second-grade math continues a hands-on approach to help students understand and apply new mathematical concepts and reinforce learned material. There is continued emphasis on number sense and place value. In addition, students learn concepts and operations: addition with carrying to five (or more) digits; subtraction with borrowing to five (or more) digits; estimation; word problems (with an emphasis on employing a variety of strategies to approach the problem); measurement; multiplication; division; operations with money; working with time; collecting and representing data; simple graphing; classification; geometry; and fractions.

First and Second Grade Science:

Approaches to Teaching and Learning

In first and second-grade science, students examine life, earth, and physical science. The six to eight-year-old child is curious, constantly questioning, seeking answers, and above all, looking for a chance to test their own reasoning. Children use the information they learn in science to provide a basis for organizing their experiences in the outside world. Hands-on learning is of paramount importance; through experiments and observations, children gain real experience with scientific methodology. Science work also incorporates math, reading, writing, and art activities. Children also have opportunities to integrate individual interests in their early research experiences.

A-Year Content and Themes:

The "A" year begins with studying Earth Science/Engineering Design, space systems, and engineering design unit called "Mars Colony". They then learn Parent/Offspring traits in their Life Science unit on structural function. After winter break, students begin a large earth systems unit on landforms and erosion using volcanoes, earthquakes, and glaciers. Finally, they end the year with a Physical Science unit on sound and light energy.

B-Year Content and Themes:

The "B" year units begin with a Life Science/Engineering Design unit on plants, emphasizing pollination and seed dispersal. Next, students explore Earth/Physical science and examine the properties of matter, highlighting the water cycle. Students then study plant and animal life in different ecosystems. The final unit ties together the timeline of life on earth with the study of life forms, focusing on dinosaurs. The study culminates in an exciting experiential learning trip about paleontology and dinosaur resources on the Western Slope.

First and Second Grade Spanish:

Approaches to Teaching and Learning

Throughout the 1st and 2nd grade years of Spanish, students experience twice-weekly class meetings and twice-weekly Spanish morning circle times. Students listen to and speak in Spanish to gain an understanding and master the use of the fundamental sounds of the Spanish language, complete an introduction to the different parts of Spanish sentences (articles, nouns, adjectives, and verbs), and begin communicating in the target language with their peers and teacher. Instruction is based on the teaching methodologies of Total Physical Response (TPR), kinesthetic movements paired with authentic and original Spanish music, and Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS), the use of diverse books and teacher-led, student-centered storytelling.

Additionally, the curriculum provides a foundation in the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language's (ACFTL) standards for foreign language learning that students build from first to twelfth grade. These include:

- Communication: Communicate in Languages Other than English
- Cultures: Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Cultures
- Connections: Connect with Other Disciplines and Acquire Information
- Comparisons: Develop Insight into the Nature and Language and Culture
- Communities: Participate in Multilingual Communities at Home and Around the World

Content and Themes:

Communication skills and content include, but are not limited to, Spanish phonemic awareness, greetings and goodbyes, introducing yourself and others in Spanish, number sense (1-50), colors and other basic descriptive adjectives, winter clothes and ski equipment, body parts, weather, favorite foods, likes and dislikes, sports, emotions, and summer vocabulary.

Students also explore diverse Spanish-speaking countries and cultures. Specifically, students examine Spain and its cultural traditions, National Hispanic Heritage Month, Latinx artists (Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera, among others), holidays, Indigenous People's Day, indigenous communities in Spanish-speaking countries, and Spanish-speakers in our community.

First and Second Grade Art:

Approaches to Teaching and Learning

The first and second-grade art program introduces various approaches to art that extend learning beyond core classes, allow students to practice fine motor skills and connect students to nature. Students practice studio habits that assist in developing the executive functioning skills necessary to see a multi-step project through to completion. Students use sketchbooks to observe the world, explore their ideas, and informally develop their work. Here, they form an artistic voice by finding personal connections to their artwork. As they gain confidence, they can share their artwork in public exhibits throughout the school and community. By the time students leave the Lower School Visual Art program, they can use basic studio skills such as ideation, critical thinking, and observation to connect and express their understanding of their natural and visual worlds.

Content and Themes:

Throughout a two-year program, students focus on color, line, shape, form, and space. They continually practice the studio habits of an artist: observe, engage, persist, reflect, stretch, explore, express, develop craft, envision, understand. Themes center around outdoor education, reusable materials, civic engagement, historical investigation, personal exploration, mastery, and immersive art.

A-Year: Elements of color, form, and space, quilting, Papel Picado, planets, acrylic and fabric paint, geometry, mandalas, pinch pots, sand art, and a collaborative project.

B-Year: Elements of color, line, and shape: Zentangle, cultural symbol study, embroidery, natural landform paintings, animal sculptures, dinosaur drawings, prehistoric dioramas.

Third and Fourth Grade

Third and Fourth Grade Language Arts:

Approaches to Teaching and Learning

The third and fourth-grade Language Arts curriculum builds foundational skills for students to become independent readers and writers. As students gain independence, they make personal connections to the literature they read and increase their self-expression in their writing. Literacy instruction is grounded in the Orton Gillingham approach; reading, spelling, and writing are taught together and presented in an explicit and multisensory manner that follows a sequential order. This cognitive approach teaches students the “hows” and “whys” behind letters and words, which gives students the tools to think through language-related material and apply previously learned skills and concepts. The cumulative nature of this approach builds fluency and automaticity. With the exposure to literature and foundational skills students gain, they leave the third and fourth-grade language arts classroom primed to be lifelong readers and communicators.

Reading:

At the third and fourth grade level, decoding instruction focuses on higher-level phonograms and syllable division patterns. In addition, students practice phonological awareness skills through games and activities. Students practice reading comprehension skills such as identifying explicit information, making predictions, asking questions, drawing conclusions, making inferences, and identifying themes. All students read books on a similar theme or period, often connected to the history or science curriculum. Reading selections are chosen to match each student’s reading level to support the sequential and cumulative nature of developing reading skills. Students are also coached in selecting appropriate personal reading books and are encouraged to read daily.

Reading Selections: *Encounter* by Jane Yolen; *Drita, My Homegirl* by Jenny Lombard; *Turtles of Oman* by Naomi Shihab Nye; *Dear Whiskers* by Anne Whitehead Nagda; *Revolutionary War on Wednesday* by Mary Pope Osbrone; *I Survived the American Revolution, 1776* by Lauren Tarshis; *The Fighting Ground* by Avi; *Because of Winn-Dixie* by Kate DiCamillo.

Spelling: Spelling instruction focuses on significant rules and patterns and explicitly teaches the connections between letters and sounds. These skills are differentiated and presented sequentially to students in small groups at the appropriate level. Lessons are presented in a multi-sensory manner, and teachers use sight, hearing, touch, and movement to help students connect language with letters and words.

Writing: Students write for various purposes and audiences using a writing workshop model adopted from the Teacher’s College Reading and Writing Project. At each grade level, students explore narrative, persuasive, and informational writing styles. They follow the writing process steps, from planning to publishing, and craft multiple drafts of each genre that they share with an authentic audience. Students also explore poetry, creative writing, and journalism. They are explicitly taught grammar concepts and cursive handwriting.

A Year Writing: Students write a realistic fictional story, a persuasive essay, and a research-based biography in the A year. Students learn strategies to develop believable characters with rich stories, organize and gather evidence to support and express an opinion, and research and write an immersive biography of an important figure in American history.

B Year Writing: During the B year, students write a personal narrative, persuasive speech, and research-based informational paper. Students continue to explore and share their personal experiences, develop their opinions by gathering and organizing information in speeches, and hone their research writing skills through crafting informational papers about desert animals in connection with the year’s experiential education trip.

Third and Fourth Grade Social Studies:

Approaches to Teaching and Learning

The goal of the third and fourth-grade social studies curriculum is to encourage students to interact with the personalities, places, and events that structured our nation and lead students to be both keen observers and informed participants in U.S. history. Students also learn to identify the role of cause and effect of historical events, practice gathering information from a variety of sources, and learn critical thinking skills. They are guided in making connections from the past to the modern-day and their lives. Literature, art, music, and other cultural materials

related to the content give context to different periods and places. Lessons emphasize using primary sources as references for research and seeking accounts of history from multiple perspectives to promote discussion, critical thinking, and creativity.

A Year Content: American History

In the A year, students explore the events that developed and shaped our nation, including the land and people before Columbus, the Age of Exploration, early English settlements, immigration, personal ancestry, slavery in the Americas, the Revolutionary War, and the development of the Constitution and Bill of Rights.

B Year Content: Westward Expansion and Life in the American West

In the B year, students explore the many factors that influenced westward expansion and the consequences for many entities. Topics include Native Americans of the West, manifest destiny and settling of the West, the relocation of Native Americans, pioneer journeys, boom and bust cycles of fur-trading, mining, energy production/fuel extraction, recreation/tourism, the transcontinental railroad, and the Civil War.

Third and Fourth Grade Mathematics:

Approaches to Teaching and Learning

The 3-4 math curriculum is founded in the Ready Mathematics curriculum, a research-based curriculum that emphasizes conceptual understanding through reasoning, modeling, and discussion while preparing students for rigorous mathematics instruction. Ready Mathematics encourages students to communicate, make connections, and find ways to solve real-world problems. These tenets help students develop the skills necessary to persevere in thinking about a problem and attempting a solution, asking good questions, understanding different ways to solve a problem, and communicating solutions to others.

3rd Grade Content and Skills

Learning units include Operations and Algebraic Thinking, Number and Operations in Base Ten, Number and Operations with Fractions, Measurement and Data, and Geometry.

The main skills emphasized in each unit of third-grade math are the following: single-digit multiplication and division (Number and Operations in Base Ten); solving multi-step word problems with all four operations (algebraic thinking); understanding fractions, placing fractions on a number line, comparing fractions, and finding equivalent fractions (Number and Operations with Fractions); reading and solving problems using scaled graphs, bar graphs, line plots, finding perimeter and area (Measurement and Data); classifying shapes and understanding the properties of quadrilaterals (Geometry).

4th Grade Content and Skills

Learning units include Operations and Algebraic Thinking; Number and Operations in Base Ten, Number and Operations with Fractions, Measurement and Data, and Geometry.

The main skills emphasized in each unit of fourth-grade math are the following: multi-digit multiplication and long division (Number and Operations in Base Ten); Solving multi-step word problems with all four operations (algebraic thinking); Multiplying, dividing, and comparing fractions (Number and Operations with Fractions); Looking at unit conversions in length, liquid volume, and mass (Measurement and Data); Identifying, drawing, and finding angles (Geometry).

Third and Fourth Grade Science:

Approaches to Teaching and Learning

The third and fourth-grade science curriculum is set up to facilitate a child's natural curiosity to test hypotheses through experimentation and explore the unknown by introducing concepts and content that are concrete and regionally focused. Instruction focuses on the scientific process and observation techniques. Most lessons are taught through Delta Science Modules that are designed to engage, challenge, and enlighten students through inquiry and hands-on activities. These modules are supported by online resources and experiential education to ensure a well-rounded approach to each topic. Each academic year students engage with the subject matter in the earth, physical, and life sciences. Finally, each spring, students embark on an experiential education experience that matches closely with the topics they have studied in science that year.

In addition to this content focus, students heighten and develop authentic scientific skills founded in the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Science and Engineering Practices. These standards outline eight critical

skills in developing student scientists. They include: defining problems, asking questions, developing and using models, planning and carrying out investigations, analyzing and interpreting data, mathematics and computational thinking, constructing explanations, arguing from evidence, designing solutions, and communicating information.

A-Year Content:

Geology: Earth Science; Physical Science: Sound; Life Science: Food and Nutrition

B-Year Content:

Earth Science: San Miguel Watershed; Life Science: Food Webs and Chains; Physical Science: Electricity and Magnetism; Earth Science: Water Cycle and Desert Ecology

Third and Fourth Grade Spanish

Approaches to Teaching and Learning

In third and fourth grade, Spanish students expand on the topics, themes, skills, and vocabulary introduced in first and second grade. Students experience twice-weekly class meetings and twice-weekly Spanish morning circle times. Through listening to and speaking in Spanish, students master the fundamental parts of the Spanish language, including pronunciation of different parts of Spanish sentences (articles, nouns, adjectives, and verbs), and they regularly communicate in the target language. Instruction is influenced by the teaching methodologies of Total Physical Response (TPR), kinesthetic movements paired with authentic and original Spanish music, and Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS), the use of diverse books and teacher-led instruction, student-centered storytelling.

In addition, the curriculum provides a foundation in the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language's (ACFTL) standards for foreign language learning:

- Communication: Communicate in Languages Other than English
- Cultures: Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Cultures
- Connections: Connect with Other Disciplines and Acquire Information
- Comparisons: Develop Insight into the Nature and Language and Culture
- Communities: Participate in Multilingual Communities at Home and Around the World

Content:

Communication skills and content include, but are not limited to, Spanish phonemic awareness, greetings and goodbyes, introducing and describing oneself and others in Spanish, number sense (1-1000), colors and other descriptive adjectives, winter clothes and ski equipment, body parts, weather, likes and dislikes, sports, emotions, and summer vocabulary.

Students also explore diverse Spanish-speaking countries and cultures. Specifically, students examine immigration and immigrant experiences, National Hispanic Heritage Month, Latinx artists (Pablo Picasso and Alejandro Dúran, among others), holidays, Spanish and Mexican cultures, Indigenous People's Day, indigenous communities in Spanish-speaking countries, and Spanish-speakers in our community.

Third and Fourth Grade Art:

Approaches to Teaching and Learning

The 3rd and 4th-grade Visual Arts extend the skills and habits introduced in first and second grade and emphasizes risk-taking, expression, and collaboration. Students expand their use of sketchbooks as a continuous visual journal to explore their ideas and further develop their work. Additionally, they are supported to plan and execute multi-step projects through guided scaffolding. As they gain confidence, they can share their artwork in public exhibits throughout the school and community. Students are given choice within units and empowered to explore and express their passions in their artwork. By the time students leave the Lower School Visual Art program, they can use basic studio skills such as ideation, critical thinking, and observation to connect and express their understanding of their natural and visual worlds.

Content:

Throughout the two-year program, 3rd and 4th graders learn specific skills and use different materials and mediums with a significant focus on movement, pattern, rhythm, and unity. Students continually practice the studio habits of an artist: observe, engage and persist, reflect, stretch and explore, express, develop craft, envision, understand the art community.

Themes: Art and nature, modernization, philanthropy, ancient traditions, identity, discipline, and practice.

Essential questions: What is art? What does a community of thriving artists look like? Where can we allow the artistic process to guide learning? How can art affect the world? Who am I as an artist?

A Year: Landscape, watercolor, pencil drawing, India ink, Pop Art, clay wheel, Georgia O'Keeffe, portraiture, and a collaborative project.

B Year: Andy Goldsworthy, grey/toned paper drawing, pen drawing, pottery, desert animal puppets

Fifth and Sixth Grade

Fifth and Sixth Grade Language Arts:

Approaches to Teaching and Learning

In the 5th and 6th grades, students further develop their critical reading and writing skills to become independent, passionate, confident, and thoughtful readers and writers. In this two-year progression, the class takes a deep dive into exploring character, conflict, and theme using multiple literary genres to build their reading fluency and hone their higher-level reading skills. Students also participate in writer's workshops to closely examine and publish a variety of written genres. Students read and write daily, are given choice in their topics and texts, and receive regular formative feedback to increase fluency, confidence, achievement, and joy in all these areas. Intermittent and regular sessions are also dedicated to building foundational skills, including grammar, vocabulary, and spelling.

Reading

The class examines literature in several genres, including realistic fiction, fantasy, adventure, young adult classics, mystery, and historical fiction. Students learn the importance of exploring and discussing the deeper meanings of texts through analysis and close reading. Students are introduced to literary devices, including symbolism, perspective, theme, types of conflict, character development, turning points, and metaphor. A significant emphasis is placed on growing and strengthening reading skills, such as questioning, inferring, connecting, envisioning, predicting, determining importance, monitoring for meaning, interpreting, and synthesizing. Students learn to make meaning from stories and draw connections from concepts and lessons from their stories to the real world.

Writing

Students begin each year crafting a personal narrative story. Students learn the foundations of narrative writing, including what makes a powerful topic, how to incorporate the story arc, strong beginnings, meaningful dialogue, internal thinking, and a theme in their storytelling. Students develop their opinion writing in the second trimester by publishing an argument essay or literary essay depending on the year of study. Students investigate a chosen topic, draft thesis statements, collect evidence, learn to incorporate quotes, craft powerful and convincing introductions and conclusions, and incorporate analysis. To conclude the school year, the class advances their research writing skills in an immersion research project. Students further develop their ability to ask relevant and meaningful questions to guide their research, strategic note-taking formats, outlining main points, writing research-based thesis statements, and find supporting evidence. Students publish a thesis-driven paper that shares their research and analysis. Students also spend time writing creative short stories, personal reflections, journal entries, adventure stories, and book talk presentations each year.

Vocabulary study is cumulative and includes regular vocabulary exercises and assignments in *Wordly Wise 3000*. Grammar study includes regular grammar exercises, continued editing in writing workshops, and mini-lessons to introduce or review concepts as common grammar problems emerge.

Writing:

Units of Study Grade 5: Narrative Craft, The Research-Based Argument Essay

Units of Study Grade 6: Personal Narrative: Crafting Powerful Life Stories, The Literary Essay: From Character to Compare/Contrast, Research-Based Information Writing

A Year novels may include: *Hatchet, The Tiger Rising, The Night Diary, The Jungle Book, The Remarkable Journey of Prince Jen, The Single Shard, Where the Mountain Meets the Moon, A Wrinkle in Time, Tuck Everlasting, The Golden Compass, The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe, The Girl Who Drank the Moon, Land of Stories, The One and Only Ivan*. Short Stories: "The Funeral", "All Summer in a Day" . Poems: "The Tyger"

B Year Novels may include: *My Side of the Mountain, Julie of the Wolves, The Thief, Detectives in Togas, Black Ships Before Troy, Wanderings of Odysseus, Walk Two Moons, Ghost, Paper Things, Crash, When You Reach Me, Pax, Fish in a Tree, Sing Down the Moon*. Short Stories: "Raymond's Run", "Thank You Ma'am"

Vocabulary Resource: *Wordly Wise Level 5 and Level 6*

Spelling Resource: *Words Their Way*

Fifth and Sixth Grade Social Studies:

Approaches to Teaching and Learning

In the fifth and sixth grades, students study civilizations with a particular focus on the ancient world over a two-year

sequence. Students read relevant literature, including historical fiction, myths, legends, and renditions of ancient texts that help them explore ancient themes, concepts, and traditions. Students study world geography and cartography to broaden their knowledge and understanding of the globe. Additionally, students build foundational skills such as note-taking, short-answer response writing, and presentation skills through daily assignments, in-class readings, and student-centered activities. Students bolster their critical reading skills by evaluating historical events, interpreting different perspectives and arguments, and examining history's role in shaping our modern society.

A Year Content:

The focus of the A year curriculum is world geography, map making, and non-western world history. The class explores map-making techniques and creates their Mercator or Winkel-Tripel projected world maps. In addition, the course studies various ancient cultures, which may include Ancient India, Ancient China, Ancient Egypt, and the Middle East. The class investigates social, political, religious, and economic structures and practices in these ancient periods and places. Additionally, they explore a time of crisis for each empire and investigate the cultural legacies and influences on the world we live in today.

B Year Content:

The content of the B year curriculum expands the exploration of ancient empires to include a study of Ancient Greece, Ancient Rome, Ancient Africa, and Southwest Native American tribes. The fourth unit of study consists of a local case study related to experiential education opportunities. Students study Southwest Native American cultures. The class takes part in case studies on the Ancestral Puebloans, the Navajo Nation, the Hopi Tribe, or the Ute Tribe. The curriculum may allow visits to important cultural sites and museums. The class celebrates and becomes more knowledgeable on the significant traditions and customs of different tribes and the challenges tribes have faced with the rise of Western expansion and settlement.

Texts and Resources:

Teachers Curriculum Institute: teachtci.com

History Alive! The Ancient World

Geography Alive! Regions and People

D'Aulaires Book of Greek Myths

Fifth and Sixth Grade Math:

Approaches to Teaching and Learning

In 5th and 6th grade, students use the Ready Mathematics curriculum to guide their learning. Ready Mathematics is a research-based curriculum that emphasizes conceptual understanding through reasoning, modeling, and discussion while preparing students for rigorous mathematics instruction. Ready Mathematics encourages students to communicate, make connections, and find ways to solve real-world problems. These tenets help students develop the skills necessary to persevere in thinking about a problem and attempting a solution, asking good questions, understanding different ways to solve a problem, and communicating solutions to others.

Student experiences are based around significant Aims for the course:

- Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them
- Reason abstractly and quantitatively
- Construct mathematical opinions and critique the reasoning of others
- Model mathematics with pictures, diagrams, tables or equations
- Make choices to use tools and strategies to problem solve
- Attend to precision by computing carefully and accurately and apply strategies to check
- Build mathematical understanding
- Build an understanding of new concepts by explicitly reviewing prior knowledge
- Practice recognizing patterns, constructing generalizations, analysis, and scientific reasoning.

Content:

Learning units include Number and Operation with fractions, decimals, and integers; Operations and Algebraic Thinking (i.e., analyze and express patterns and relationships of numbers); Measurement and Data with units and volume; Geometry with the coordinate plane, two-dimensional figures, and three-dimensional figures; Ratios and Proportional Reasoning; Expression and Equations, and Statistics and Probability.

Fifth and Sixth Grade Science:

Approaches to Teaching and Learning

In fifth and sixth grade, students are ready to refine their techniques of scientific discovery by using the scientific method. This concept is introduced broadly at first but becomes more structured as the year progresses. As the scientific method is incorporated into various topics, students understand the natural world through an analytical lens. They quickly learn to pose questions, make predictions, create hypotheses, collect data, conduct research, and present findings. At the heart of the curriculum are open-ended questions about the natural world that students answer through careful observation, the use of scientific evidence, and reasoning.

Students continue to develop authentic scientific skills throughout the two-year progression based on the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Science and Engineering Practices. The NGSS outline a set of eight skills that are critical to developing student scientists. These skills include: defining problems, asking questions, developing and using models, planning and carrying out investigations, analyzing and interpreting data, mathematics and computational thinking, constructing explanations, arguing from evidence, designing solutions, and communicating information.

Content:

Students complete an in-depth study of earth science, life science, and physical science in both years of the two-year sequence. Students employ the scientific skills of observing and comparing, classifying, measuring, inferring, formulating hypotheses, designing and testing investigations, collecting and interpreting data, and recognizing variables throughout each unit. The content covered in these years becomes a bit more abstract as students connect themselves to the world.

A Year:

Life Science Units: Kestrel Project, Cells, Human Systems
Earth Science Units: Biomes, Geology and Ecology of Place-Based Investigation
Physical Science Units: Simple Machines, States of Matter, Atoms and Molecules

B Year:

Earth Science Units: Pollution and Renewable Energy
Physical Science Units: Force and Motion; Flight, Rocketry, and Space-
Life Science: Animal Classification, River Ecology

Fifth and Sixth Grade Spanish:

Approaches to Teaching and Learning

Throughout the 5th and 6th grade years of Spanish, students experience twice-weekly 45 minute classes and one 75 minute block class. Through listening to and speaking in Spanish, students master the use of the fundamental parts of the Spanish language and gain fluency in pronouncing and using the different parts of Spanish sentences (articles, nouns, adjectives, and verbs). They begin to build sentences and use expressive language verbally and written, and regularly communicate in the target language with their peers and teacher. The program uses the teaching methodologies of Total Physical Response (TPR), kinesthetic movements paired with authentic and original Spanish music, and Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS), the use of diverse books and teacher-led, student-centered storytelling.

Spanish classes are filled with multiple learning activities influenced by TPR pedagogy. Students sing authentic Spanish songs paired with kinesthetic movements; they read and annotate original stories and create their own. Students also engage in many different Spanish speaking and listening games such as Quizlet Live, Tincards by Duolingo, ¡Splat!, Cucharas, matching games and others.

Content:

5th grade: Students review basic introductions (me llamo, te llamas, se llama, etc.), numbers (1-1000), colors and basic descriptions. Vocabulary and grammar include complex adjectives paired with nouns, the noun/adjective agreement rule, fundamentals of a Spanish sentence, conjugating high-frequency verbs in the present and future tenses (estar, ser, and other regular -ar, -er, -ir verbs). Cultural studies include an independent Spanish-speaking

country study, el mes de la herencia latinx (September and October), and people and holidays such as Sonia Sotomayor and Día de los muertos.

6th grade: Students review basic vocabulary and grammar concepts such as high-frequency verbs and present and future tense verb conjugations. They are introduced to the preterite and imperfect (past) tenses. Cultural focuses include an individualized Spanish-speaking country study, el mes de la herencia latinx (September and October) with a focus on Cesar Chavez, a look into the world of Miguel de Cervantes and Don Quijote, and Día de los muertos.

Fifth and Sixth Grade Art:

Approaches to Teaching and Learning

Art classes in the 5th and 6th grades are designed to build student autonomy and accountability. Students engage in art games or challenges that introduce themes, skills, or materials for an upcoming project. Students are guided in scaffolding individual projects into step-by-step plans. Technology is slowly introduced as students gain organizational skills with their Chromebooks and the shared class iPads. Group discussions, gallery walks, interactive quizzes, quickdraws, and art shares occur throughout the year to support students planning, executing, and reflecting upon their art-making.

Additionally, students expand their use of sketchbooks as a continuous visual journal to explore their ideas and further develop their work. As they gain confidence, they can share their artwork in public exhibits throughout the school and community. Students are given choice within units and empowered to explore and express their passions in their artwork. By the time students leave the Lower School Visual Art program, they can use basic studio skills such as ideation, critical thinking, and observation to connect and express their understanding of their natural and visual worlds.

Content:

Throughout the two-year program, 5th and 6th graders learn specific skills and use different materials and mediums with a significant focus on movement, pattern, rhythm, and unity. Students continually practice the studio habits of an artist: observe, engage and persist, reflect, stretch and explore, express, develop craft, envision, understand the art community.

Essential Questions: How has art evolved? What does a community of thriving artists look like? Where can we allow the artistic process to guide learning? How can art affect the world? What kind of art needs to be contributed to the community/world?

A Year: charcoal, tie-dye, silk dye, batik, block-printing, collage, realistic drawing, expressionism, and sustainable art.

B Year: acrylic paint, Greek God cartoon drawing, clay wheel, model bridges/cities, fabric paint, screen printing, portraiture, Native Art, and activist art.