



FIFTH GRADE CURRICULUM

The fifth-grade year centers on the thematic study “All About America,” which integrates many elements of the fifth-grade curriculum including: Social studies, language arts, geography, math, science, art and music. This thematic study provides a meaningful and rich experience through which students develop a wide variety of skills. Generating thoughtful questions and facilitating in-depth discussions allow students to draw individual conclusions about different time periods in American history.

OVERVIEW

Students in the fifth grade continue to develop the civic and economic skills they will need as citizens, especially as they learn about the nation’s foundational documents. Students examine the human and physical geography of the United States by studying past and present-day maps of the United States and identifying connections with geography and the ethnic, linguistic, and religious settlement patterns that shaped the new nation.

The content covered in grade five is expansive, and the discipline-specific skills that are to be taught are equally demanding. To both organize the curriculum and allow students to explore the past in depth, teachers may frame instruction around questions of historical significance. This discipline-specific form of inquiry promotes student engagement, deepens content understanding, and develops critical thinking.

Whenever possible, the past should be examined through the eyes of women, men, and children from a variety of historical groups. Viewing the past from the perspectives of those that lived it is best done through a variety of primary sources. Throughout the year, students should be introduced to sources presented in different formats. They should begin to understand that people in the past had different perspectives; one goal of learning history is to understand why people in the past lived the way they lived. It is also intended for students to begin to understand why the current world is structured the way it is.

LANGUAGE ARTS

Language Arts is integrated into all areas of the curriculum.

READING

As fifth graders have transitioned from “learning to read” to “reading to learn,” we work with students to further develop their ability to read effectively and to establish a love of reading. Classes are organized in a variety of groupings, both teacher-facilitated and student-led groups, allowing students to read and analyze a range of literature from poetry to nonfiction to biography.

Skills

- Recognizing different genres
- Developing listening skills to enhance meaningful discussions of literature
- Distinguishing fact from opinion
- Expanding vocabulary
- Developing strategies for finding meanings of unknown words
- Literal comprehension:
 - Find the main idea
 - Analyze character, plot, theme, setting

- Read for detail
- Sequence events
- Inferential comprehension:
 - Identify cause and effect
 - Draw conclusions based on textual clues
 - Generate discussion questions
 - Summarize main idea and details
- Monitor reading for comprehension using the following strategies:
 - Preview
 - Infer
 - Visualize
 - Make Connections
 - Ask questions
 - Summarize
 - Predict
 - Respond

WRITING

Students use writing both as a process of self-discovery and as an effective mode of communication. Through the writing workshop and the writer's notebook, students develop personal writing topics and create drafts that they revise and edit. The writing that students do in fifth grade is often connected to an area of thematic study. Students write in a variety of genres throughout the year, including newspaper articles, journals, poetry, and letters. We emphasize different steps of the writing process – including brainstorming, drafting, revising, and editing – in order to aid each student in their growth as a writer.

Skills

Handwriting

- Use neat and legible handwriting
- Increase proficiency at typing and using a computer for major pieces of writing

Writing Habits

- Writing on a daily basis
- Independently use the writing process, including: brainstorming, planning, drafting, revising, editing, publishing
- Use graphic organizers as a tool for organizing writing

Conventions (Grammar and Mechanics)

- Recognize complete sentences, fragments, and run-ons
- Review the following parts of speech
 - Noun
 - Action verb
 - Adjective
 - Pronoun
- Learn the following parts of speech
 - Prepositions
 - Conjunctions
 - Indirect and direct objects
 - Nouns – concrete vs. abstract

- Helping verbs
 - Adverbs
- Master the following parts of speech
 - Subject-predicate