

# Curriculum Highlights Through the Grades

A year-by-year view of the journey from first through eighth grade

|                               | FIRST                                                                                                                                                                                   | SECOND                                                                                                                                                                      | THIRD                                                                                                                                                                                                      | FOURTH                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | FIFTH                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | SIXTH                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | SEVENTH                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | EIGHTH                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| HISTORY, MYTHOLOGY, GEOGRAPHY | Traditional fairy tales and folk tales from various world regions, including Europe, China, Africa, and Japan, capture imagination, build visual imagery, cultural connections.         | Heroic tales from both mythical and real people throughout history and from around the world encourage a sense of responsibility, ethics, positivity for the world.         | Hebrew and Native American stories emphasize a sense of individuality and strong relationships within community. Hands-on study of farming, shelter building, trades, and fibers in various cultures.      | Norse myths and Native American quest stories reveal powerful characters with distinct personalities. Map-making, orienteering, local history, and geography develop an understanding of the interrelatedness of human activity and the physical earth. | Histories and religions of ancient cultures including India, Persia, Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Greece encourage an examination of personal strivings. Earth’s physical features and natural resources through the study of geography. | The rise and fall of the Roman Empire; study of Medieval history, including ancient Britain, knighthood, the life of Mohammed, the rise of Islam, and the Crusades. Geography of South America, topographical mapping. | The Age of Exploration, Renaissance, and Reformation trace an awakening of independent thought and discovery that mirrors the student’s own. World geography widens the view of the earth and its peoples.                        | Revolutions and modern history follow the movements that shaped the present day. Geography, world cultures, and current events connect study to the world students are preparing to enter.    |
| LANGUAGE ARTS                 | Writing and literacy developed through stories, poetry. Daily phonics practice, vocabulary development, summary work, writing. Emphasis on pencil grip and letter formation.            | Story summarization aids independent reading and writing, developing familiarity with skills in spelling, grammar, punctuation. Practice with reading books.                | Ongoing reading practice, grammar, comprehension strategies, spelling, cursive writing, independent composition emphasize skills, creative, flexible thinking.                                             | Development of skillful and fluid reading and writing strategies using historical fiction, creative writing, the editing process, report writing, and parts of speech. Media literacy: Cyber Civics On Ramps.                                           | Creative writing, biographies, fiction, report writing, and parts of speech. Grammar skills deepen along with reading and writing skills. Media literacy: Cyber Civics On Ramps.                                                    | Reading novels in class and at home, literature circles, expanded writing skills, grammar, sentence diagramming, note-taking skills, oral presentations. Media literacy: Cyber Civics Level 1.                         | Creative and essay writing develop a distinct voice, while Shakespeare and poetry open the ear to language. Literature analysis, grammar, and sentence structure build precision. Media literacy: Cyber Civics Level 2.           | Literature analysis, short story and persuasive writing, and speech strengthen argument and expression, culminating in an independent research project. Media literacy: Cyber Civics Level 3. |
| MATHEMATICS                   | Lessons on numeracy and four math processes introduced and experienced through stories, drawing, mental math, manipulatives, patterns, and rhythms.                                     | Strengthening understanding of four operations through math games, mental math, multiplication patterns, and written work.                                                  | Practical application of mathematics, including linear measurement, weight, volume, money, time. Focus on memorization of multiplication tables, intro to long division.                                   | Study of fractions, mixed numbers, multiplication, area, and long division through written math work and map making.                                                                                                                                    | Developing mathematical fluency through the mastery of fractions, mixed numbers, multiplication, area, and long division. Freehand geometry.                                                                                        | Compass geometry, complex decimal and fraction processes, word problems, percentages, formulas, business math. Emphasis on effort and organization.                                                                    | Pre-algebra and geometry introduce abstract reasoning, while ratios, percentages, and practical applications keep that thinking rooted in the everyday world.                                                                     | Algebra, geometry, and the Platonic solids meet financial math, probability, and advanced problem solving that reward persistence and clear organization.                                     |
| SCIENCE                       | Engagement through exploration, observation, stories, weekly farm visits set the stage for the study of science in later grades.                                                        | Daily exploration and observations, weekly farm trips lay the foundations for the study of science in later grades. Animal fables give life to local and worldwide animals. | The cycle of food and fibers from planting, harvesting, cooking and eating, spinning and producing goods. Appreciation for the value and work of the farmer nurturing, cultivating, and protecting nature. | Understanding and appreciating the animal kingdom and the human being through comparative, conceptual, and observational skills.                                                                                                                        | In-depth observation and study of botany and insects develop an appreciation for the beauty of transformation.                                                                                                                      | Mineralogy, geology, astronomy, world biomes. The observation of the physics of sound, light, heat, and magnetism cultivates and develops critical thinking.                                                           | Physiology, astronomy, and mechanics, along with inorganic chemistry and physics, invite close observation and the search for underlying cause.                                                                                   | Anatomy and physiology, physics and meteorology, and organic chemistry develop analytical thinking through experiment, measurement, and careful record-keeping.                               |
| MOVEMENT                      | Circle activities and embedded movement in lessons develop rhythm and spatial and proprioceptive awareness.                                                                             | Social games and imaginative exercises develop spatial awareness, memorization skills, and concentration.                                                                   | Social games and coordination exercises cultivate unity and team spirit.                                                                                                                                   | Outdoor education, games and exercises for dexterity and agility, cultivate confidence, healthy competition, and team building skills.                                                                                                                  | Pentathlon: javelin, shot put, discus, wrestling, running, and concentration exercises develop individual strengths and cultivate healthy competition.                                                                              | Exploration of the balance between teamwork and individuality with a focus on courage and discipline. Juggling and Double Dutch jump rope.                                                                             | Team building, cooperative games, and outdoor skills build trust and resilience within the class, while physical fitness supports growing strength and coordination.                                                              | Leadership, team sports, and outdoor challenges ask students to guide as well as participate, with physical fitness sustaining stamina and self-discipline.                                   |
| MANDARIN                      | Language-rich, experiential lessons through recitation of verses, songs, games, and artistic experiences.                                                                               | Language-rich, experiential lessons, recitation of verses, songs, games, and artistic experiences. Intro conversational phrases.                                            | Language-rich, experiential lessons, complex recitations of verses, songs, games. More complex phrases, Chinese stroke and character formation.                                                            | Language-rich, experiential lessons, complex recitations. Writing and grammar begin; more conversational phrases practiced.                                                                                                                             | Language-rich, experiential lessons, complex recitations. Writing, grammar, and conversation increase. Cultures explored, Chinese New Year puppet show.                                                                             | Language-rich, experiential lessons, complex recitations; writing, grammar, and conversation increase. Detailed cultural exploration, interpretive dance performance for Mandarin.                                     | Language-rich, experiential lessons featuring conversational Mandarin, grammar, reading, writing, and detailed cultural studies.                                                                                                  | Language-rich, experiential lessons featuring advanced conversation, literature, composition, and detailed cultural studies.                                                                  |
| PRACTICAL & FINE ARTS         | Exploration of space, form, and color through painting, drawing, and modeling. Knitting builds neurological connections and develops concentration, fine motor skills, and mathematics. | Knitting and purling develop hand-eye, fine motor, and math skills. Modeling and drawing from stories. Watercolor painting deepens understanding of color.                  | Crocheting and fiber arts as part of the study of fibers in various cultures. Painting, drawing, modeling build powers of observation and expression.                                                      | Cross-stitch projects require concentration, counting, and spatial awareness. Map-making, painting, drawing, and modeling boost powers of observation.                                                                                                  | Knitting socks fosters focus, follow-through, fine motor and math skills, appreciation of functional art. Intro to woodworking. Detailed botanical drawings, artistic maps, watercolor, sculpting.                                  | Problem-solving through craftsmanship and artistry: hand-sewing, carving a wooden spoon, charcoal sketching, colorful geometric drawings, watercolor paintings.                                                        | Drawing, painting, bookbinding, handwork, woodworking, and 3D wet felting develop craftsmanship and patience. Perspective drawing, portraiture, and map drawing sharpen observation, and the class play calls on the whole group. | Bringing eight years of practical and artistic work to a close, engage in woodworking, perspective drawing, beadwork, clay work, machine sewing, fine arts, and the class play.               |
| MUSIC                         | Exposure to rhythms, meters and tonalities, pitch, four elements of movement, penny whistle, group participation.                                                                       | Further rhythms, meters and tonalities, pitch, group singing, echo and imitation, basic composition tools.                                                                  | Rhythms, meters and tonalities, group participation, further composition tools, interval training.                                                                                                         | First exposure to ukulele, chords, harmony and chord progressions, more intervals, develop music notation.                                                                                                                                              | Ukulele, chords, harmony and chord progressions, intervals, music notation, drum pads, playing and notation.                                                                                                                        | Music genres, guitar, chords, chord progressions, improvisation, notation, drum playing and notation.                                                                                                                  | Harmony, choral singing, and music theory prepare students for ensemble performance, while world music widens the ear to unfamiliar sounds and forms.                                                                             | Music history, composition, and performance come together in the graduation presentations that close the eighth grade year.                                                                   |