Oak Hill Fourth Grade

Curriculum and Program Overview

*Faith Intellect Social Awareness Community Personal Growth*

**Developmental Stages and Transitions**

Fourth grade is a year of transition - academically, emotionally, and socially for children and parents.  Throughout this year you will see many changes. The end result is positive, but the road to get there can be bumpy.  While Junior Kindergarten through third grade is typically a time when students learn basic factual information and foundational skills such as the alphabet, sounds, math facts, etc., fourth grade brings a new way of learning.  Now, rather than learning to read, our program emphasizes reading to learn.  Fourth graders have to juggle more books, learning, social situations, independent work, and responsibilities. Their thinking will be stretched – no longer will they just memorize, but they will begin to learn the skills necessary to understand and analyze content, concepts, and situations.  With that comes new expectations, challenges, and opportunities for your children.

The best way we can help the students grow spiritually, creatively, and personally is by working together to help them become self-reliant, self-confident learners.  To do that, they will experience mistakes, but we will be there to help learn from them with encouragement.  At this age, everything becomes magnified – positively or negatively.  Fourth graders, developmentally, are at a stage where they are able to begin to understand that there is a viewpoint other than their own.  As a result, it’s important for all of us to encourage students to learn the skills of problem solving and perspective taking in helping them view situations from another person’s point of view.

Rather than attempting to solve problems for students, we work to teach them how to problem solve.  Empathizing and restating their feelings using words is the first step. This will empower students to become self-reliant learners.

It is important to encourage students to try new things.  Expectations regarding organization, responsibility, studying, and working independently will be significantly different than third grade because developmentally, fourth graders are ready to “learn how to learn.”  This is a shift in thinking for them and providing them with the encouragement and the “I can” attitude is essential!

We must remember, they are only in fourth grade.  Mistakes will happen – that is part of the learning process and the best way for students to learn.  Making mistakes and learning from these mistakes leads to success.  We are here to provide developmental support for your child’s greatest success.

**Curriculum Highlights**

The fourth grade has many highlights throughout the year. The most memorable is the celebration of the All Saints’ Mass. Students research a saint, write a report, and compose a speech that is presented at the All Saints’ Mass. As part of the social studies curriculum, students design and create a kachina doll. This cross curricular activity allows students to immerse themselves in the Hopi culture by using their imagination to not only create a kachina, but also write a story about how these spirits helped the Native American people. Students in fourth grade spend the last quarter of the year focusing on Missouri. Besides learning information about our state, students are able to re-enact the Dred Scott trial at the Old Courthouse. Science classes cover many topics, however one of their favorite topics is the weather unit. Students create an iMovie on the iPad that is shared with the other students. Reading classes include book clubs that allow students to read books and share their thoughts and impressions with others in their group. Many of the activities that the students in fourth grade participate in involve the use of iPads. These are used daily in various subject areas.

**Curriculum Overview**

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| **Language Arts** | Sadlier-Vocabulary  Step Up to Writing-Voyager Sopris Learning Houghton Mifflin-Spelling Houghton Mifflin-English Fountas and Pinnell-Guided Reading |

The fourth grade curriculum covers the areas of reading, writing, listening, speaking, and standard language conventions. Students will know and apply the foundations of informational texts and skills across the grade level curriculums.  Students will develop written topics with supporting points based in fact and opinion. They will develop skills to work collaboratively and to present ideas based on research.  Also emphasized, is being able to demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English both in writing and speaking.  To enable students to have a broader understanding of how reading, writing, and English language are in every part of their daily lives, language arts skills will be taught across the curriculum.  Our goal is to help students connect language arts skills to their everyday lives.

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| **Mathematics** | Macmillan-McGraw Hill-Math  ALEKS-web based Assessment and Learning in Knowledge Spaces |

The fourth grade mathematics curriculum covers the areas of operations, algebra, geometry, measurements, fractions, and decimals. Students will know and apply the properties associated with the four basic operations to help them know their math facts through twelve. Students will be able to analyze patterns to find missing information using algebraic reasoning and identify two and three dimensional shapes and figures. They will be able to interpret and apply measurements of time, length, capacity, and weight, using both standard and metric units. In order to compare, order, and find equivalent fractions, students will be able to recognize the relationship between parts of a whole.  Students will be able to describe the relationship between a fraction and a decimal while comparing and ordering them. To enable students to have procedural knowledge and conceptual understanding, mathematics will be taught using practice and standards, appropriate mathematics tools (manipulatives) and technology.  Our ultimate goal is to help students connect mathematics to their daily lives.

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| **Religion** | Sadlier-God’s Laws Guide Us Break Through Catholic Bible Apostolic Work: Sunshine Ministries |

The fourth grade religion curriculum focuses on the Beatitudes, the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy, and the Ten Commandments.  The students will learn about each of the Ten Commandments and how they can be applied to daily life.  In addition, students will learn how they should live their lives by practicing both the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy. Students will understand that as Christians, it is our responsibility to minister to the poor and less fortunate, both physically and spiritually. The Apostolic Work for grade four is the Sunshine Ministry.  It is through this work of service that the students will continue to love and serve as Jesus did. Through the gifts of time and talents, the students model behaviors that invite others to follow Jesus with their words and deeds.

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| **Science** | Scott Foresman |

The fourth grade curriculum covers the areas of Matter and Energy, Force and Motion, Ecosystems, Earth’s Systems, Scientific Inquiry and Technology, and Human Activity. Students will be able to identify and apply how matter changes. The students will be able to understand and describe how matter flows through ecosystems and how organisms interact within the ecosystems. Developing an understanding of the common processes of the Earth’s systems, including weather and Earth’s cycles will be emphasized. Students will be able to develop testable questions that are fair and justifiable based on evidence.  Our goal is to provide students with a knowledge base to understand the world in which they live while understanding how their interactions with the world can affect all organisms and structures in our world.

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| **Social Studies** | Macmillan-McGraw Hill-Our Country’s Regions  Macmillan-McGraw Hill-Missouri |

The fourth grade curriculum covers the regions of the United States, the state of Missouri, as well as map and geography skills. Students will learn the historical and economical importance of each of the regions. Students will be able to name and identify all states and capitals and understand the history of our country from the discovery of the new world to the present day. Students will be able to describe the relationships between the branches of our government and will focus on historical events and the economy specific to Missouri. The students will understand the interdependence between states and the role Missouri plays in our country. Our goal is for our students to have an understanding of the rich history of each of the regions, major events, and economics of each state as well as the importance of Missouri in today’s world.

**Art**

The fourth grade art curriculum encourages students to make connections between the art of the U.S. and Asian art. Throughout the year, students are provided with opportunities to explore art techniques from Taiwan while creating scroll paintings, puppets, and calligraphy. They will develop their figure drawing skills and acquire a repertoire of watercolor techniques to have at their disposal. Students will analyze how jazz was reflected in art of the Harlem Renaissance and how Missouri artists reflected everyday life in their paintings. The fourth grade curriculum focuses on the elements and principles of form, space, contrast and proportion. These projects will be shared within our global community through The International Children’s Art Exchange.

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| **French** | Symtalk Language Systems-Gerard et ses copains!  Book D |

Fourth grade students add to their vocabulary base learning about places and transportation. Adjectives are added as well as subject and object pronouns. Many new verbs are introduced and students begin making their own verb dictionary with present tense verb conjugations. Bien sûr, there are plenty of games and fun activities to reinforce all of this new information. Fourth graders also learn to recite the Sign of the Cross and the *I am a Child of the Sacred Heart* (Je suis un enfant du Sacré Cœur) in French providing another connection with our Sacred Heart heritage.

**Music**

Through the Kodaly hand signs the students will continue to learn how to match pitch.  Note reading of the treble clef, and rhythmic values are continued through the soprano recorder and African drums.  Improvisation and composing simple melodies for the soprano recorder and the xylophones is continued. Students will learn about various cultures through their music and dances.  In the third quarter students will be introduced to the four families of the orchestra.  This will be accomplished through Benjamin Britten’s “A Young Person Guide to the Orchestra.” During the second semester all the third and fourth grade students present a musical review for all the students and parents.

**Physical Education**

In fourth grade the students begin many new units. These units include; volleyball, circuit training, basketball, softball, pickleball, square dancing, and tinikling. These are more complex units that are more challenging for students to master at a younger age however, their skills have developed to a level where the students are able to have competitive games in our PE classes. The students enjoy being challenged by new skills.

**Instructional Strategies**

Fourth grade instructional strategies come in many forms. These include direct and whole class instruction when new information is presented. As students master concepts at different rates and in different ways, small group instruction and individualized learning is used to reinforce or enrich the learning of each student. Throughout the year, discussion groups, peer partner learning, jigsaws, research projects, SMART Board instruction, class projects, and puppets are used to engage students and to encourage questioning and problem solving. Students are pretested in mathematics allowing for the needs of the individual learners.

**Assessment**

Fourth grade students will be assessed in many ways. These include formal assessments that may be teacher created or tests that accompany the textbook series. The tests may be short answer, fill in the blank, multiple choice, or true and false. Other types of assessment may include informal questioning, observations, projects, oral presentations, written responses, student products, and self-evaluations. Accommodations are made to assess students in ways that reflect their mastery of information and concepts. Grades will be posted online, and parents will be able to view grades throughout each quarter.

**Technology Integration**

Fourth grade students use technology daily. Each student is assigned an iPad at the beginning of the year. Students use iPads daily in class for research, dictionary usage, spelling tests and review, educational games, independent study, and ALEKS. Apps are changed periodically to correlate with the topics that are being studied. The iPad tools are used to assess students through the class email and iMovies. SMART Boards are used for learning, review, practice, and interactive educational games.

**Homework Expectations**

Homework will be one hour or less each day. This includes written work, studying, reading logs, ALEKS, and long term projects. Homework should be completed neatly and turned in on the assigned date. Points will be deducted for late work. Based upon the assignment, homework will be graded or used as a tool for review. We ask parents to review homework nightly and review with his/her child for tests. All homework assignments will be posted daily on the class calendar. There is generally no homework on the weekends unless there is a long-term project students are working on.

**Classroom Routines**

Fourth grade routines center around respect for others and living out the five Sacred Heart Goals. These include daily prayer and learning to live and learn in a classroom community. Students will learn to work in cooperative groups that accept differences and value the intellectual input from others. Each day we work to foster inquisitive minds and instill a love of learning in each child. The fourth grade gathers for periodic discussions as to how to problem solve both in and outside of the classroom.

**Communication**

Fourth grade teachers communicate with parents weekly. Blog entries will alert parents to upcoming events, tests, special activities, and summaries of what the students are learning. Blogs are posted every weekend so parents will be aware of the following week’s events. Homework is posted daily on the class calendar. Parents can check assignments after 4 p.m. each day. Thursday folders will include student work as well as information about additional school opportunities. Thursday folders should be signed and returned on Friday or Monday. Papers should be returned with the folder. Fourth grade teachers can be reached by email and parents can expect a timely response.