



Language Arts and History Curriculum Overview

Ms. Greene- 4th Grade

Language Arts Curriculum Overview

Our fourth-grade **reading curriculum** is a combination of whole group shared inquiry discussions (Junior Great Books), Fountas & Pinnell Interactive read aloud and mini lessons, novels, focus groups that emphasize particular strategies readers are working on, and individual “Just Right” books where students will demonstrate mastery of strategies that he or she is working on.

The primary emphasis of each will be on comprehension, oral reading skills, and improving mastery of reading strategies such as summarizing, predicting, and making inferences about characters and plot with evidence from the text. Students will be thinking within the text (summarizing, fluency), thinking about the text (analyzing and critiquing) and thinking beyond the text (inferencing, predicting, and making connections). In addition, students will learn about literary elements including theme, point of view, plot, figurative language, and symbolism. Fourth graders will, as a class, read texts such as *Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing* by Judy Blume, *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis, *Because of Winn-Dixie* by Kate DiCamillo, and more.

Vocabulary is pulled from several sources. *Wordly Wise* focuses on understanding the word, using it in a sentence, and using just the right word. When reading novels, vocabulary will be pulled directly from whole-group novels, which gives students context for each word, teaching them by example how the word can be used in writing as well as in spoken language.

Writing and grammar are also part of our Literature and Language Arts curriculum. At RPA, we use Lucy Calkins and the Teachers College Writing Project’s *Units of Study* and the *Writers Workshop*, which incorporates a strategy-based curriculum that allows us to meet each student where he or she is at in his or her writing development. Students will enhance their writing techniques in the form of mini-lessons, independent writing, conferencing with the teacher, and sharing writing with peers and the school community.

This writing program will be used in conjunction with an interactive notebook containing grammar usage and mechanics. Students will have mini-lessons in which they will create a page in their notebook that can additionally be used as a resource when writing in all subjects.

Another writing and grammar resource we will use is *Voyages in English*, which explicitly focuses on the mechanics of grammar and great writing strategies. Grammar will be taught through weekly grammar mini-lessons, reviewing and reinforcing basic skills in the areas of sentence structure, parts of speech, usage, and mechanics, and will then be further practiced in student writing.

“The need for exchange of meaning and sharing of human experience is a special domain of the English Language Arts. It forms the foundation for effective communication, which is determined by the ability to construct meaning from and reflect upon the written and spoken word, and to communicate and present ideas effectively.”
(English/Language Arts Curriculum Guide, National Consultants for Education)

Language Arts Grading

The percentage breakdown for Language Arts is as follows:

- *Classwork and Homework* 20%
- *Quizzes* 30%
- *Tests/Projects/Papers* 50%

History/Social Studies Curriculum Overview

- Develop an understanding of history, events, and people of Florida.
- Develop an understanding of how Early Native American Indians lived and the things they did.
- Locate and identify the major physical geographic areas within the state.
- Develop an understanding of the formation of the political structure within the state.
- Students will understand North America using maps and other geographic models.

History/Social Studies Grading

- The percentage breakdown for History/Social Studies is as follows:
 - *Classwork and Homework* 20%
 - *Quizzes* 30%
 - *Tests/Projects/Papers* 50%

Letter Grades

97-100 A+	87-89 B+	77-79 C+	67-69 D+
93-96 A	83-86 B	73-76 C	63-66 D
90-92 A-	80-82 B-	70-72 C-	60-62 D-

Classroom Rules

- 1) Raise your hand.
- 2) Listen to the speaker.
- 3) Be kind and respectful.
- 4) Keep your hands and feet to yourself.
- 5) Keep your things neat and organized.
- 6) Always try your best!

Classroom Management

My goal is to create a safe, community-based classroom environment where each child can grow both academically and spiritually, as well as developing appropriate social skills. I hope to individually guide each child to reach his/her goals. To ensure success in these areas, I use a behavior system that is based on positive reinforcement.

Positive Reinforcements

- Classroom Dojo points and redemptions: erasers, pencils, desk pets (erasers), water bottle stickers, candy, homework passes, treasure box, coupons, extra recess, etc.
- Happy Notes: handwritten notes that are announced to the class and usually contains a small treat/prize
- Positive Conduct Certificates
- Brain breaks: short challenges, yoga poses,
- GoNoodle: little videos to get the students up and moving, or calm and collected 😊

Classwork

Anything completed together in class is expected to be done in the way in which it is modeled for the student. A document camera is often used to project the assignment and students are expected to follow along and complete the assignment with the teacher. Students are also expected to notify the teacher if they have a question, are confused, lost or are missing necessary materials. The teacher will keep them on track but they must communicate and voice their needs during class.

Homework

Fourth Grade is a year of great growth and responsibility. As such, it is important that homework is completed to the best of the student's ability and on time. Students will not have homework in every subject each night, but when they do, it should always be written in their student planner. Homework is always posted on the board and students are given ample time and explicit directions on where in the planner the assignments go. Students are expected to write their assignments daily. You may also check FACTS/RenWeb as a back-up. Student's agenda should have the most accurate assignments written. (Sometimes plans/assignments change based on how the lessons went in class.)

Additionally, students will be asked to work on various stages of projects and/or reports as homework. Of course, project/report assignments will always be clearly defined and given with sufficient notice.

Quizzes, Tests, Reports, and Projects

All quizzes, tests, reports, and projects will be posted in FACTS/RenWeb under the subject. Students will be notified in advance as well as given ample time to complete the assignments. Tests will always be on material that has been covered in class. Students will use their notes and activities to help them study for the test. There will be many quizzes, tests, projects and reports given throughout each quarter. Projects and reports will be graded based on a rubric that students will be given in advance.

Absences

When students are absent, it is up to them to make-up their work. The assignments will be given to them, paperclipped to a "while you were out" paper, along with a due-date. These assignments are then posted in FACTS/Renweb as missing, which automatically assigns the student a zero. Once completed, turned in and graded, the grade will be entered and the "missing" will disappear. If not received by the due date, the assignment will then remain a 0. This helps keep the student on track, their grades up-to-date, and parents can see that their child has missing work.

Communication

Your child's blue "home folder" and planner should go home each night and is expected to be returned to school the following day. Any papers expected to be returned will be placed in the "Return to School" pocket on the left side of the folder. Papers in the "Keep at Home" pocket should be cleaned out each week.

It is important for teachers and parents/guardians to work together and stay in communication with each other, uniting our efforts to educate your children. I promise to reach out when I see concerns, as well as notable behaviors. We can stay connected through:

- **FACTS/RenWeb-** All student assignments and grades are posted on this online gradebook.
- **Phone Calls/Emails-** you may call the school and leave me a message, or if I am not teaching a class, we can talk. You can also email me at LGreene@RoyalPalmAcademy.org
- **Conferences-** in addition to the scheduled conferences, first and third quarters, you may choose to meet with me throughout the year. Please call or email me to schedule an appointment that works for both of us.

Final Notes

We are called as Christians to always give of ourselves. My promise to you (and to your children) is that I will give the students my time, respect, and my greatest effort as their teacher. My request is that they provide me with the same.

*"For it is in giving that we receive."
-St. Francis of Assisi*

I look forward to a fabulous fourth grade year with these students. Let's make it the best yet!

Many thanks and blessings,

Lesley Greene | 4th Grade Language Arts and History Teacher

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