

The Green Vale School

Kindergarten Curriculum: Program Outline

The purpose of this curriculum guide is to inform parents as to the core material to which their child will be exposed. Our integrated Kindergarten curriculum provides each student with the opportunity to participate through hands-on experiences, child-centered activities and play. This positive environment allows children to see learning as enjoyable and beneficial, which assists them in creating a solid foundation for their future achievements. The curriculum is designed to enhance children's intellectual, social, emotional and physical development, while supporting students in acquiring the essential skills and knowledge to become collaborative and independent learners.

Writers' Workshop

The Kindergarten curriculum follows Writers' Workshop which was founded at Teachers College. It is currently implemented at Green Vale in grades K-5. Through Writers' Workshop, your child will learn to plan, draft, and revise stories, and best of all, write with confidence and skill.

- Launching the Writing Workshop
 - Introduce Writers' Workshop
 - Think of a story, draw it and then label it
 - Recall episodes from their lives, record them on pages, and revise pictures by adding details and labels
 - Gain confidence in their ability to be authors

- Small Moments: Personal Narrative Writing
 - Write true stories from their lives and record them across pages of little booklets
 - Learn that stories have a beginning, middle and end
 - Begin to write words and sentences to match their stories
 - Learn that words have a beginning and ending sound
 - Continue to edit their work by adding details to their pictures and words

- Writing for Readers: Teaching Skills and Strategies
 - Continue writing stories from their lives
 - Learn writing strategies such as putting spaces between words, using their own personal word wall, using punctuation at the end of each sentence and beginning each sentence with a capital letter
 - Understand how to edit with a partner

- Cumulative Review
 - Review all of the writing skills learned this year
 - Begin to add more pages to our booklets
 - Writing paper contains more lines for writing and smaller box for illustrations
 - More and more words and sentences are written in our stories

Language Arts

The Kindergarten Language Arts program draws on an assortment of carefully selected materials to introduce and reinforce a broad range of skills. We use authentic literature as well as more specific phonics and skills-based materials to teach reading readiness. Open Court by SRA is the literature-based anthology series used in kindergarten at The Green Vale School. Each child's individual abilities and needs are recognized and addressed through a combination of whole class, small group and individual instruction.

- Reading – Open Court Program
 - Inspiration for Reading
 - Exposure to different genres of literature such as fiction, non-fiction, fables, fantasy and poems
 - Availability of books in classroom (picture books, leveled readers and books from reading program)
 - Weekly visits to the library
 - Exposure to written word throughout the room v. Word wall words
 - Alphabet
 - Recognize uppercase letters
 - Recognize lowercase letters
 - Recite the alphabet song and chant
 - Realize that letters form words
 - Phonemic Awareness
 - Listening for sounds in the beginning, middle and end of words
 - Detecting rhymes
 - Blending sounds
 - Reading pre-decodable and decodable books
 - Listening for syllables
 - Vowel sounds, both long and short
 - Comprehension
 - Recalling and retelling a story
 - Comparing and contrasting stories
 - Listening to different genres of stories
 - Predicting by using context clues and illustrations
 - Sequencing
 - Cause & effect
 - Distinguishing between fantasy and reality
 - Recognizing details

- Grammar & Usage: Mechanics
 - Print directionality
 - Use of punctuation marks
 - Page knowledge
 - Author/illustrator knowledge
 - Sentence structure
 - Building vocabulary
 - Word position
- Writing
 - Handwriting – Zaner Bloser
 - Learn proper formation of upper and lowercase letters
 - Learn to write first and last name using upper and lowercase letters
 - Learn to write on lined paper (headline, midline, and baseline)
 - Understand directionality
 - Ability to use spacing
- Speaking & Listening
 - Following directions
 - Taking turns and raising hands
 - Sharing relevant ideas
 - Ability to articulate and communicate
 - Ability to express oneself
 - Asking questions
 - Relevance
 - Words (who, what, when, where, why, how)
 - Attention span

Science

Children of kindergarten age are naturally inclined to explore their world. Our goal is to nurture this interest through engaging, age appropriate, purposeful activities. We intend to foster basic scientific literacy by encouraging the children to measure, observe, interpret and make predictions through hands-on, meaningful experiences. Our Science program has been developed to specifically target the growth of each child’s conceptual understanding and acquisition of skills in the following academic areas: ecology, space, the human body, weather, energy, matter and living things. Additionally, the children are given the opportunity to further explore these concepts through class trips and weekly visits to our state of the art science laboratory. The science program works in tandem with the laboratory to enhance and reinforce each child’s experience and understanding of the scientific concepts presented during their kindergarten year.

- Ecology
 - Conservation of Natural Resources
 - Air
 - Water
 - Land
 - Prevention of Pollution
 - Reuse
 - Reduce
 - Recycle

- Earth Science
 - Sun
 - Effects of Sun
 - Shadows
 - Moon and Stars
 - Day and Night

- Human Body
 - The Five Senses
 - Nutrition
 - The Food Pyramid
 - Healthy vs. Non-healthy Foods
 - Hygiene and Germs
 - Identifying Body Parts
 - Proper Care of Your Body

- Weather
 - Identify various types of weather such as rainy, cloudy, windy, sunny, and snowy
 - Explore how weather affects people
 - Identify, describe, and compare the four seasons
 - Observe seasonal weather

- Energy
 - Sound
 - Heat
 - Magnets

- Matter
 - Properties
 - Buoyancy
 - Mixtures

- Living vs. Non-living Things
 - All Living Things
 - Basic Needs
 - Animals
 - Tadpole to a frog
 - Insects
 - Birds
 - Plants
 - Structure
 - Growth
 - Life Cycle
- Human Being

Mathematics

Singapore Math - Math in Focus. Although the mathematical groundwork is set earlier, in pre-k, to help prepare for upcoming demands in this discipline; kindergarten is when the Math in Focus curriculum officially begins. The conceptual approach of the Math in Focus Kindergarten program recognizes the need to build on children's natural ways of representing their ideas about numbers. Each concept is presented first concretely, then pictorially, and finally abstractly. Children learn to use numbers to make connections and realize the relationships between them in relation to real life situations. Kindergartners are encouraged to think mathematically through opportunities to investigate, discover, explore and apply solutions to mathematical problems.

There are 4 main categories for each lesson:

Investigate: Children are invited to sing, clap, rhyme, and discuss colorful, playful scenes presented in the program's Big Book while the teacher systematically employs and elicits related math talk.

Discover: Children are provided with hands-on work to allow them to act out or engage actively with the new math idea.

Explore: Concepts are reinforced and enhanced as children go one step further with the concept.

Apply: Children work independently with paper and pencil to practice the new concept or skill.

Kindergarten students study numbers and operations in base ten through 100 including addition and subtraction. Emphasis is placed on composition and decomposition of numbers through 20. Additional topics of study include number stories, classifying, sorting, patterning, measurement, geometry, and money.

Social Studies

The emphasis in kindergarten is to provide socialization experiences that help children bridge their home life with their life in school and then to the larger communities. The overall objective of the primary social studies program is to sensitize children to the reality and needs of the many diverse people and cultures coexisting in our time, and to recognize rapidly changing environments. The social studies curriculum is taught in a developmental sequence starting with the simple and moving towards more complex comparisons in order to broaden the child's perspectives. It is a natural tendency for children to be curious about the world and human activity. The exploration of social studies is done with the young child's temperament and interests in mind. It includes peer interactions, historical and cultural celebrations, geographic distinctions, community awareness and civic responsibility. Instilling this knowledge is accomplished through reading literature, dramatizations, making observations, group discussions, class trips, current events, hands-on projects and activities pursued in classroom centers. The social studies expanding themes incorporated in this curricular framework are aimed at generating skills for social competency.

These themes for competency combine the following strands:

- My family and me
- Community
- Cultural differences
- Geographical areas and map studies
- Holidays
- Famous people

- Civics
 - Citizenship and community outreach
 - Each individual is unique and important
 - Respect for the rights of others; respect for another's property
 - The collective mind; the group cause and group effort
 - Responsibility; following directions and completing tasks
 - Discussing waste vs. non-waste

- Government
 - Living in a Democratic society
 - Introducing our country's system of voting and electing officials
 - Learning that one's opinion matters; respecting the opinions of others
 - Understanding that rules, restrictions and limits are important in all communities

- Historic Events in the United States of America
 - The holidays and celebrations of our nation
 - National symbols; the flag and the Pledge of Allegiance
 - Columbus Day and the voyage to the New World

- Thanksgiving, Native Americans and the pilgrims
 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day, President's Day, Memorial Day
- Events of World History
 - Families, cultural groups, cultural differences, traditions, celebrations, holidays and festivals
 - Discovering relationships among people, places and environments
 - Recognizing varieties and differences of family life and cultures
 - Christmas, Hanukkah, New Year's, Chinese New Year, Kwanza
 - The passage of time; calendars and how our calendar operates to divide time into months, weeks, days
 - Life styles; urban, suburban, rural and national or international affiliations
- Geography
 - Geographical areas and map studies
 - Recognizing and applying terms related to location, size, direction and distance
 - Recognizing a map as a pictorial representation of reality
 - Recognizing that countries are different sizes and have different shapes
 - Recognizing the globe as a representation of the earth
- Economics
 - Recognizing community helpers who provide goods and services
 - Division of labor; jobs
 - Cooperation
 - Organizational skills
 - Trade, money and value
 - Communication
 - Transportation