

Social Studies

In fourth grade students explore the regions of the United States. Units include:

- Maps and globes
- Illinois
- Northeast region
- Southeast region
- Middle West region
- West region
- Southwest region

Physical Education

Students learn, develop, and apply skills needed for participation in personal fitness and lifetime activities that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. Concepts reviewed, refined, and reinforced include:

- Specialized motor skills
- Body mechanics
- Health-related fitness
- Cooperative skills

Visual Arts

The purpose of the visual arts curriculum is to have students grow creatively, intellectually, emotionally, and aesthetically. The content standards include:

- Understand and apply media, techniques, and processes
- Use knowledge of art elements and principles of design
- Choose and evaluate ideas, subject forms, and symbols
- Understand visual arts in relation to history and cultures
- Reflect on and assess student work
- Make the connections between arts and other disciplines

Music

The general music program will develop the students' understanding and the relationship of music to other disciplines and cultures as well as history. Content standards include:

- Singing
- Performing on a variety of instruments
- Improvising melodies
- Composing and arranging
- Reading and notating music
- Listening, analyzing, and describing music
- Evaluating music and musical performances

General Information

Technology

The goal of technology education in District 204 is to provide students with the opportunity for technological literacy starting with the elementary curriculum. Our emphasis with students is the application of technology across all grade levels and curricular areas as well as the development of problem-solving and critical-thinking skills.

Reporting to Parents

Classroom progress is reported through quarterly report cards, annual conferences, and informal parent-teacher communication. Student evaluation is consistent with District goals and State Standards.

Testing

The District achievement testing program assesses the strengths/needs of our instructional programs and measures the achievement of individual students. Testing includes standardized tests, State tests, District assessments, and classroom evaluations.

Homework

Homework at the elementary level begins in an informal fashion but becomes more formal and requires more time and effort as the child progresses through each grade.

Parents are expected to be sufficiently interested in their child's education to commit the time and energy needed to monitor/supervise the child's home study and thereby insure that he/she makes a reasonable effort to complete homework assignments.

FOURTH GRADE

Curriculum Overview



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Academic Program

Language Arts

Language Arts is composed of several interrelated areas: reading, writing, spelling, listening, and speaking. At the elementary level, the student is encouraged to learn to communicate clearly through development in these five areas. The *Immersion Approach* is used in the teaching of writing to capitalize on the natural connection between reading and writing. The *6 + 1 Trait Model* is utilized for teaching and assessing writing. This model focuses on qualities that define strong writing: conventions, ideas, organization, word choice, sentence fluency, and voice.

Reading

- Use a combination of world analysis and vocabulary strategies to identify new words
- Formulate questions to determine meaning based on plot, character, action, or setting
- Connect, clarify and extend ideas through classroom discussions and activities
- Demonstrate understanding of structure through the use of graphic organizers, outlining, and teacher modeling
- Be able to use inferences and interpretations based on text
- Compare the content and organization of various selections
- Recognize similarities/differences of varying styles or points of view
- Use comprehension strategies to enhance understanding
- Using KWL charts, be able to apply personal background knowledge and experience to literary text
- Compare ideas from texts representing a variety of times and cultures
- Apply self-monitoring and self-correcting strategies continuously to clarify understanding during reading
- Interpret information from tables, maps, visual aids, and charts to enhance understanding

Writing

- Develop multi-paragraph compositions that include an introduction with topic sentence, various levels of support with details, and a conclusion

- Use pre-writing strategies to choose a topic and help generate ideas (e.g., webbing, brainstorming, and use of graphic organizers)
- With help through teacher modeling, use the characteristics of a well-developed narrative, expository, and persuasive piece to help formulate their own piece of writing
- Write creatively and feel comfortable writing short stories, poetry, plays, songs, and friendly letters
- Use transition words to connect ideas, adjectives, adverbs, and prepositional phrases to enrich their own language
- Use available technology to design, produce, and present compositions and multimedia works
- Revise and edit using self, peers, and teacher

Spelling

- Proofread one's own work and the work of others; revise accordingly
- Correctly spell appropriate high frequency words
- Use phonemic clues phonetic and/or developmental spelling to spell unfamiliar words

Listening

- Demonstrate understanding of the listening process (e.g., sender, receiver, message) by responding both (1) orally and (2) in writing in formal and informal situations
- Ask questions and respond to questions related to oral presentations and messages in small and large groups
- Restate and carry out a variety of oral instructions

Speaking

- Present oral reports to an audience using correct language and nonverbal expressions for the intended purpose and message with a suggested organizational format
- Use speaking skills and procedures to participate in group discussions
- Identify methods to manage or overcome communication anxiety and apprehension (e.g., topic outlines, repetitive practice)

Mathematics

Everyday Mathematics encourages teachers and students to explore more of the spectrum of mathematical ideas through a deeper understanding of key mathematical concepts and an in-depth study of all the content strands of mathematics.

The curriculum allows students to construct an understanding of mathematics from their own experience, and includes practical routines to build arithmetic skills that are essential for building number sense, estimation skills, and flexibility in a problem-rich environment. Important concepts or skills recur with variations throughout the curriculum, and concepts are introduced and revisited in a variety of formats providing considerable practice.

Our focus is to have students recognize that there are various ways to accomplish a task, and to use the best tools and strategies for solving problems. This is done by establishing a framework for dialogue about mathematics between the teacher and students.

Content strands include:

- Operations and Computation
- Numeration
- Patterns, Functions & Algebra
- Data and Chance
- Measurement and Reference Frames
- Geometry

Age-appropriate, essential mathematics skills (automaticity) are also taught and practiced daily through our **Otter Creek Mathematics** skills program.

Science/Health

The purpose of science is to provide students with balanced, (Life, Earth, Physical and Health) relevant, hands-on opportunities and experiences to better understand science and to promote scientific literacy.

Fourth-Grade topics include:

- Life – Environmental Factors
- Earth – Rocks and Minerals
- Physical – Mystery Powders
- Health – Circulatory/Respiratory Systems
- Planetarium – Earthdome Planet Simulation
- Mini-kit on Magnets & Electricity

Each Unit or Kit is explored over a period of several weeks. Leveled-Readers serve to explore selected content areas.