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**Spelling** in Fifth Grade is actually a sixth grade level curriculum, Spectrum, based on learning words according to patterns. Every other week, words are introduced and the pattern of those words is discussed in class. Throughout the week, students practice learning the words at home. Their knowledge is tested through various methods at the end of every week.

For **vocabulary** development, (using the Level Five Wordly Wise curriculum) students learn the definitions of words, but more importantly how these words are used in context; if prefixes and suffixes change the words' meanings, and the connotation of various words within our language. To gain understanding beyond definitions, students study 100 basic Greek and Latin roots words, to enhance their knowledge of origin of English words.

### **Library**

Students are challenged to independently select age-appropriate materials and to read independently during library classes. Fifth Graders are exposed to the Library of Congress organizational structure as an alternative to the Dewey Decimal System. Read alouds involve more complex themes and promote discussion and debate about plot, characters, and theme. Students select and create a skit based on an easy fiction book and perform the skits for younger students at Whitefield and the Atlanta Youth Academy. The Fifth Grade year culminates in a visit to the Middle/Upper School library for an orientation and discussion about library services in the Middle School.

### **Math**

Fifth Grade math builds on arithmetic skills learned in earlier grades to give students a strong foundation in calculation, problem solving, data collection, and spatial reasoning. Instead of simply teaching “how” to approach problems, instruction emphasizes the “why” by exploring connections across the math curriculum. The Fifth Grade math curriculum uses the \_\_\_\_\_ textbook. \_\_\_\_\_ includes multiplication and division concepts, place value, units of measure, statistics, fraction and decimal concepts, geometry, probability, and algebraic principles. Students will have the opportunity to participate in such math-related activities as Pi Day, Math Olympics, data collection surveys, math fact races, the estimation jar, and the challenge problem of the week.

### **Music**

In Fifth Grade, students' transition from a general music class and each chooses a performing ensemble to join - band, orchestra, or chorale. The Fifth Grade is another culmination year, giving students an opportunity to build on all previous skill acquisition by learning to play an instrument or develop vocally. The band is a wind ensemble comprised of the following instruments: flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, and baritone. In the orchestra students may choose from the following string instruments: violin, viola, and cello. The chorale is a vocal ensemble of students who learn to effectively use their voice, learning proper breathing technique and tone production. All ensembles rehearse during the school day.

### **Physical Education**

The goal for our Fifth Grade students is to demonstrate competency in locomotor and non-locomotor movements and skills, acquire knowledge of fitness components, be able to demonstrate exercises to increase strength and endurance, while understanding the benefits of regular physical activity. Fifth Grade students are accountable for sportsmanlike conduct through class and competition. The focus on Fifth Grade health is on nutrition, physical

fitness, and personal hygiene. The physical education program is designed to develop physically educated individuals who have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to enjoy a lifetime of healthy physical activity.

### **Science**

Science in Fifth Grade is a balance between experiential learning and direct instruction as we study four specific units, all part of the Houghton-Mifflin science curriculum. While students learn the biological make-up and functions of plants, they are able to demonstrate creativity and knowledge of a plant cell by constructing a model to present to the class. We conclude the plant unit with a visit to the Atlanta Botanical Gardens.

The second unit of study in science is the solar system. As students learn the steps to an empirical study, they are challenged to think and problem solve like an astronaut. Students explore the vastness of our universe and analyze its beginning as it relates to the Bible. Planetary knowledge is deepened as students demonstrate their ability to research and collect data about one particular planet of interest. Study in this unit includes a three day, two night adventure to the Huntsville, Alabama U. S. Space and Rocket Center where students participate in building and launching rockets, as well as take part in a rocket simulation activity.

The third and fourth units involve lab-based learning of energy, work, simple machines and light. Students are asked to generate hypotheses, organize data, infer conclusions and synthesize information to understand the principles of motion, friction, forces, and properties of light. Various materials are used in order that students gain experience in measuring length, weight, force, and work.

### **Spanish**

Fifth Grade students continue acquiring new vocabulary with the Total Physical Response Storytelling method. Speaking, reading and writing skills are practiced the first semester with Volume 3 of the *Cuentame Gabi* Series. In the second semester verb patterns are studied with the aid of musical verb chants in preparation for the grammar focus of Middle School. The culminating highlight is the preparation for a Spanish/Mexican restaurant outing, where students build confidence and the reward of good Spanish speaking skills is most satisfying.