

PREK-4

Art

Our PreK-4 Art program is designed with every aspect of a child’s development in mind. The curriculum takes an exploratory approach to art tools, materials, and concepts. Students are introduced to the art of drawing, painting, cutting, tearing, molding, sculpting, etc. They draw and print lines, arrange paper shapes, paint insects, explore clay, create patterns, and mix colors. The emphasis is on the *process* of creating and discovering, as the process is more important than the product, at this age. Learning to use, respect, and care for tools and materials; engaging the muscles and developing physically; practicing and refining new skills; striving for the right words to describe a work of art and to share ideas – these are all important parts of what it means to discover the artist within.

Bible

The PreK-4 Bible curriculum is guided by two books, *Five-Minute Devotions for Children and More Five Minute Devotions for Children*, both by Pamela Kennedy. While learning facts about animals, these stories tie in lessons about Christian living and character. Each week, the children will also memorize a Bible verse which correlates with their devotions.

History/Social Studies

Our Social Studies curriculum combines an introduction of history and geography of the United States in addition to a study of American holidays. Our class will discover the “geography” of Whitefield, the importance of building friendships and community, transportation, community helpers, recycling and other types of community service.

Language Arts

Beginning to Read, Write and Listen by Pleasant T. Rowland (McGraw-Hill) is the comprehensive reading-language arts curriculum that we utilize. In order for a child to read, phonic awareness is a foundational skill that begins in PreK-4. Therefore, this curriculum encompasses reading, handwriting, auditory and oral language skills; preparing children to read and to write. Our instruction provides children with a thorough understanding of the letters of the alphabet and their sounds-the most basic elements of our spoken and written language. This is a multisensory program of visual, kinesthetic, and auditory activities.

We begin to introduce students to the Orton-Gillingham approach (the clock-face) to handwriting and phonics, which will be expanded upon during their Kindergarten year.

Our Language Arts Supplemental resources include:

- Alpha Tales: ABC Songs Sing-A-Long CD with Chart
- Sounds and Symbol: High Hat
- Handwriting without Tears

Library

Our PreK-4 classes learn what libraries are, what librarians do, and appropriate library behavior. They develop listening skills through read-a-louds of fiction and non-fiction materials. They learn that books are authored and illustrated by people and the labels for the parts of a book. Our students are introduced to the proper handling of books.

Genres that are included at this age are Caldecott Awards, Newberry Awards, and Coretta Scott King award winning books, folk tales, and poetry. Drama is woven throughout their curriculum by incorporating puppetry and skits performed in the spring by the Fifth Grade class.

Math

PreK-4 children are natural mathematicians because they delight in exploring their environment and describing shapes, sizes and numbers. Our math curriculum supports and builds upon their eagerness to compare quantities, learn and use new words, make designs and move about in our three-dimensional world.

The lessons and activities of the Houghton Mifflin PreK-4 Math curriculum closely align with and support the five key math strands identified by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM):

- Number and Operations which includes comparing sets, counting, connecting number words to groups of objects and numerals, using ordinal numbers, exploring fractions, and generating and solving simple addition and subtraction problems.
- Algebra which includes sorting, working with patterns, and describing change over time.
- Geometry which includes two-and three-dimensional shapes, positions, and symmetry.
- Measurement which includes comparing and ordering objects according to size, length, volume, weight, and time; using nonstandard measurement units, and exploring uses of measurement tools.
- Data Analysis and Probability which includes gathering, displaying, and interpreting data.

Our Math Supplemental Resource includes:

- *Number Tales* by Judy Nayer offers a fun and easy way to capitalize on a child's natural interest in learning numbers. Each simple imaginative story focuses on a different number or skill, teaching the numbers 0-10, 30, 100, skip counting, simple addition and simple subtraction.

Music

PreK-4indergarten students participate in a highly experiential curriculum. Music-themed books, video and audio examples, simple songs, and body rhythms help PreK-4 students to understand basic music principles and express them outwardly. These and other diverse activities contribute to helping students expand their musical experience at a young age.

Physical Education

Our PreK-4 physical education curriculum (following the National Association for Sport and Physical Education) is designed to introduce students to new ways to move, be active, and enjoy learning. Students learn basic loco-

motor and non-locomotor skills, increase activity, develop and improve their personal, social, and attitudinal characteristics needed to be physically active for life.

Science

Science touches every aspect of our lives, and one of the most common ways we experience science is through the life cycles of plants and animals. With the Scholastic Science Vocabulary Readers curriculum, we are building children's core science knowledge, acquiring key science vocabulary, and applying what they learn to experiences outside the classroom.

Spanish

Our Pre-Kindergarten classes begin the journey of the Spanish through building a repertoire of child-centered, Latin-American Folk songs by Jose Luiz Orozco. The song language is introduced with gestures for kinesthetic learning, and then followed with reinforcing, playful activities, such as follow the leader, coloring, or a guessing game. These songs provide a rich bank of phrases that become a foundation for whole language learning in following years. To supplement our program, a senior from the Upper School comes weekly to share his or her passion of the language with the children.

KINDERGARTEN

Art

Kindergarten-level Art is a carefully structured, child-centered program, designed to capitalize on young children's natural curiosity and readiness to explore. The Kindergarten program combines a solid foundation in how to use tools and materials with the delight of exploring them, developing skills and inventing new ways to create works of art. Students are introduced to drawing, painting, cutting, tearing, folding, molding, etc. This experimenting with new tools, materials, and processes takes the mystery out of being an artist, and opens up the possibility of creative artistic expression. Carefully chosen works of fine art and the pictures of the world around us help spark our student's interest and enthusiasm. Kindergarteners create original works of art inspired by rich images, personal experiences, and imagination.

Bible

Our Bible curriculum, Positive Action for Christ, emphasizes a study of Biblical events and personalities in order to build upon students' faith and knowledge. Opportunities are given for students to apply Biblical principles and develop character traits through weekly Scripture memorization. Once per year, each class performs a school-wide chapel program focusing on a favorite Bible verse or lesson; this begins in Kindergarten and continues through Fifth Grade.

History/Social Studies

The social studies curriculum in Kindergarten is published by *Pearson Learning*. It is designed to teach history and geography topics in a sequential order throughout a student's lower school years. At the conclusion of Kindergarten, students will be able to identify and name the seven continents. Other topics covered this year include map and geography skills, the history of Native Americans, the history of the United States, world exploration, and the history of the American presidents.

Language Arts

Our Kindergarten **reading** curriculum incorporates the blending of the *Open Court* Kindergarten curriculum with Orton Gillingham instructional practices. Through the combination of these curricula our students are introduced to the critical components of phonics and reading. These include multi-sensory instruction, a comprehensive curriculum sequence, and the direct instruction of phonics. At this age, students are at various levels of reading ability and we respond by providing books according to that ability. At the same time, we work with each student to master reading age-appropriate level of books in preparation for First Grade. As an example, our annual field trip to the Center for Puppetry Arts enhances the students learning in the following areas: knowledge of various literature types, and a visual appreciation of stories coming to life on stage as well as audience participation and etiquette

Additionally the Open Court curriculum provides a systematic and explicit instruction of **comprehension writing**, and language skills and strategies. Through the curriculum the students are introduced to rich and diverse genres of literature. The **handwriting** section of Language Arts is based on the Riggs Institute Handwriting curriculum. Our students are introduced to the lines on the paper, the basic strokes to form the 26 letters of the alphabet, and the placement of those strokes to form letters. Through daily **dictation** exercises the teachers assess each student's letter formation, spacing, neatness, and accuracy of matching letter sounds to the appropriate letters to write and **spell**.

The **writing** curriculum evolves from the handwriting lessons to the actual dictation of complete sentences. The students are introduced to sentence rules and proper punctuation. This curriculum progresses to include the Kindergarten Power Writing process. The students are introduced to the basic parts of a paragraph and follow this format as they begin to produce their own stories and illustrations. Their stories will always include a title, a topic sentence or main idea, detailed sentences, and a conclusion.

Library

Selecting books based on personal interest and learning checkout procedures build on their introductory library skills. Students are taught how to use the alphabetical order to locate books and how to select books by perusing the shelves. Reference skills begin with globe usage during story readings. Each Kindergarten student is given an opportunity to enact the plot of an easy fiction book with puppets. Various forms of poetry are explored and multi-cultural folktales are incorporated into reading times.

Math

The comprehensive math curriculum at Whitefield Academy provides a basic introduction to math operations. Throughout the year, the topics include sorting, patterning, position recognition, graphing, plane shapes, fractions, time, money, length, weight, addition, subtraction, and number recognition from 0-100. Within each lesson, a variety of manipulatives are used such as Unifix cubes, thermometers, rulers, scales, clocks, and money to enhance learning. Students also complete many in-class, hands-on activities and create math journals to further engage learning and critical thinking skills.

Music

In Kindergarten, students continue to develop the fundamentals of a musical experience by learning about instruments and their families, participating in song time, playing rhythm instruments, and learning the basic

fundamentals of musical expression [loud/soft, high/low and fast/slow]. Acquisition of these skills aids students in developing deeper musical experiences in later grades.

Physical Education

Our curriculum continues to follow the National Association for Sport and Education standards. During Kindergarten, our students continue to improve their locomotor and non-locomotor skills, fitness, health and nutrition. Incorporated into PE are aspects such as compassion for others, cooperation vs. competition, respect for equipment and good sportsmanship. Health and nutrition is also introduced at this grade. The goal of the health and nutrition program is to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to practice health-enhancing behaviors such as proper nutrition, healthy eating and food selection.

Science

Science and literature are integrated in Kindergarten through a variety of literature and meaningful hands-on exploration in class and with guest visitors. Through our Open Court Reading curriculum, science topics such as the ocean, the wind and weather, planets, and shadows are further explored. The Kindergarten science program is augmented by the *Science Studies Weekly* publication. The experiential learning in science includes a trip to the Cagle Dairy Farm.

Spanish

The Kindergarten students continue to build a repertoire of songs and cultural poems with motions to appeal to their musical and kinesthetic intelligences. By way of an easy immersion methodology, they play at make-believe situations in Spanish while acquiring whole language structure. Paper-bag puppet shows involve illustrating, reading and performing a condensed fairy tale. Each spring the Kindergarten classes undertake a service project for the children of Fundación Amor y Esperanza in Quito, Ecuador. This cultural connection is fostered throughout their Lower School years; so that in the Upper School they may participate in the annual Ecuador Mission Trip.

1ST GRADE

Art

The First Grade art program builds upon the elements of art: line, shape, color, texture, and form, which are embedded throughout each unit to ensure continual application and understanding. The sequence of lessons has been carefully planned to accommodate the interests, skills, and abilities of all students. The following are included in First Grade art:

- Looking Around: Seeing our world, students are encouraged to see the beauty in the world, in everyday objects, and in nature while creating artwork inspired by this universal theme.
- People and Places: Seeing details and actions in which students create self-portraits, portraits of their friends, and people in action, as well as pictures of houses and rooms where people live, using various art mediums.
- Colorful Stories: Students will use their imaginations to make color choices to paint, and illustrate stories and poems. Students learn to mix color palettes and develop painting techniques; because “art is a way of experimenting with color.”
- Art and Nature: Fascinated and inspired by the natural world, students will learn to draw and imprint insects and plants, make cut-paper creatures, and create animal clay sculptures.

- Change: Students will demonstrate their understanding of change by painting their favorite seasons and showing changes in nature. Looking into the future with an artistic perspective, students will design the evolution of robots and vehicles.

Every unit is enriched with images from art and the real world. References include *Explorations in Art*, Davis Publications, Inc. and Wilton Art Appreciation CD-ROM “Elements and Principals of Design” and “Color.”

Bible

Our First Grade curriculum focuses on the many gifts of love provided for us by God. Emphasis is on creation, families, friends, possessions, Jesus Christ and God’s care for us. Biblical integration is a vital part of our curriculum and is woven throughout all subject areas. The students memorize weekly Bible verses and character traits. Teaching all subjects from a Christian worldview is the foundation of First Grade. Our experiential learning activities for Bible include students’ participation in a class chapel program (presented to the entire lower school), as well as a Christmas service project at a local nursing home.

History/Social Studies

Our history curriculum, published by Pearson Learning, is rooted in Truth and historical facts. We identify landforms and continents, develop map skills and learn about the community around us. First Grade students enjoy learning about Native Americans, Sacagawea, early explorers and settlers. Our students are introduced to life on the Mayflower and the many hardships endured by the Pilgrims as God called them to settle America. The second half of the year is devoted to studying American symbols, leaders, and citizenship. Various events and activities used to experience this learning include: Thanksgiving Feast, a patriotic program, Black History month, a United States presidential poster presentation, and the study of cultures from around the world.

Language Arts

Our language arts curriculum creates a literature-rich environment that instills a passion for lifelong **reading** and a love of literature. Students will be exposed to many different genres such as fiction, nonfiction, informational writing, photo essays and poetry. Through the use of our curriculum, *Open Court*, an anthology of rich children’s literature, the students will learn comprehension strategies such as predicting, sequencing, drawing conclusions, inferring and summarizing. Student’s reading programs in First Grade include both whole group instruction as well as tailored leveled “readers” based on individual diagnostic assessments (such as reading inventories, fluency rates and level of comprehension). Vocabulary instruction is an integral part of the First Grade curriculum. Vocabulary is taught explicitly within the context of reading and within the units of study.

Orton-Gillingham is a multi-sensory approach to explicitly and systematically teach phonics, spelling and reading. Students are taught reading and **spelling** as an interrelated discipline using all pathways to the brain. The disciplines are broken into three strands: word structure, syllabication and division rules; and 150 core First Grade words for spelling. Students learn through a systematic approach of using phonograms and common spelling patterns. Towards the end of the academic year, students have an opportunity to participate in a spelling bee competition with other Atlanta area schools.

The First Grade **handwriting** curriculum is also Orton-Gillingham and is taught explicitly and systematically. The students transition from Kindergarten wide-lined paper to First Grade specific Riggs paper. Students review the basic strokes to form the 26 letters of the alphabet. Through daily handwriting activities, students are taught proper letter formation, spacing, neatness, posture, correct paper position and proper adherence to margins.

During **writing** lessons, our students are taught written expression through a systematic format which includes sentence structure, grammar, capitalization and punctuation. Students complete First Grade with a skill set which allows them to write a complete, eight-sentence paragraph that includes a topic sentence, major details, minor details and conclusion. The use of grammar is reinforced throughout the writing process. By writing “thank you” notes to volunteers and parents, the First Grade students are challenged to practice these skills.

Grammar is taught explicitly within the context of composition writing. Students identify and appropriately use nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. Writing dictated sentences is a daily part of our curriculum. Students can identify four types of sentences: declarative, interrogative, imperative and exclamatory. Students learn to use apostrophes in both contractions and possessive nouns. They also master the use of commas-- in dates, to separate ideas in a sentence and within the body of friendly letters.

Library

In the First Grade, students are introduced to the Dewey Decimal System of Classification. They learn about the different sections of the library and that books are shelved according to the author’s last name. Fiction and non-fiction is differentiated through various books and sections of the library. As individual reading skills expand, students are guided to books they are able to read on their own that will challenge their reading level. Students begin transitioning from easy books to chapter books.

Math

Houghton-Mifflin math is a proven, scientifically based research curriculum. Our program builds math concepts by going from the concrete to the abstract in a very systematic, hands-on approach. Skills covered in First Grade include number concepts through 20; addition and subtraction concepts; data graphing, classifying and sorting objects; spatial sense and patterns; fractions and probability; solidifying place value, ordering and comparing numbers; time and calendar; using money, length and weight, capacity and temperature, and two digit addition and subtraction. Our students master math facts 0-18 by learning strategies and applying these on timed tests. Each student utilizes a math journal that includes the following sections: story problems, application of concepts and math vocabulary. Students participate in hands-on learning via educational games and math workshops. Students are expected to learn and apply rich mathematical vocabulary in class discussions.

Music

Students begin their journey to music literacy, in First Grade, by learning how to read and perform rhythm patterns both by themselves and with others. Much time is spent developing basic singing skills and kinesthetically feeling musical concepts with body rhythms and motions. Additionally, learning about instruments and their families through discussion and multimedia examples is a large part of the First Grade curriculum.

Physical Education

The goal for our First Graders is to improve locomotor movements and begin to develop non-locomotor skills such as throwing, catching, kicking, paddle striking, etc. These movements are the building blocks to more complex motor movements that will be needed in future skills. First Grade nutrition education incorporates introducing

students to the food pyramid. The goal of the nutrition program is to equip students with the knowledge and ability necessary to make health-wise choices.

Science

All of science is taught in the context of integrating our Christian faith into science education. Our science curriculum is entitled *Science Discovery Works, Concordia Edition*. This series helps the teacher point students to evidence in creation of God's love, wisdom, power and majesty. Connections made between the concepts of science and the Word of God will enable each student to respond with love, gratitude, awe, and reverence toward the Creator.

Developing scientific thinking in students is an important part of science education. To learn how to think this way, students need opportunities to develop the science process skills, critical thinking skills, and scientific reasoning skills that support scientific inquiry. Therefore we provide students with many opportunities to construct their own knowledge of science through hands-on activities. We study the life cycle of plants and animals, investigate weather, explore the planets and examine and classify rocks. Experiential learning, relative to science, typically includes a day at the Chattahoochee Nature Center, a visit to the Tellus Museum, a trip to the Atlanta Botanical Gardens, Pet Day, an in-school day with *High Touch, High Tech* and a science day.

Spanish

First Grade students open each class with "*Buenos días, Maestra. Que Dios le bendiga*" (Good morning, Teacher. May God bless you). Three volunteers then lead the class in the steps of Total Physical Response (TPR), a multi-sensory approach to language learning. The first step is for students to imitate gestures related to the teacher's words or phrases, followed by a closed-eye check, then the favorite 'tricking step' where the volunteers must do what the teacher says and not what she does. The '*Hola Niño's*' story series are presented visually and orally in past and present tenses to continue student's exposure to whole language. First Graders comprehend interrogatives (who, what, why, when, how, how many) in the context of stories related to greetings, the body, food and family. They master elements of Spanish by playing "left hand, right foot" while singing *Father Abraham* and playing the Spanish version of Twister. They craft a 'caterpillar' and perform *La Oruga Hambrienta* (The Hungry Caterpillar) in small groups on video.

2ND GRADE

Art

The Second Grade art program continues to build upon the elements of art, which are embedded throughout each unit to ensure continual application and understanding. The sequence of lessons has been carefully planned to accommodate the interests, skills, and abilities of students.

The Second Grade units include:

- Nature's Beauty: Students learn that most people respond to nature's beauty. Our students' projects include creating pastel leaves and flowers; mixing colors to paint a colorful garden, while using cool and warm colors to create sceneries such calm seascapes and active skies, showing the moods of weather.

- Expressing moods and feelings through art, students create paper collages of faces, draw portraits of a classmate, and learn to use “perspective”(near and far) creating various scenes of people.
- Back to Nature: Using nature as a backdrop for ideas and details, students will draw favorite animals, create underwater scenes or illustrate fantasy landscapes.
- Picture Stories: Through images and ideas, students learn to illustrate stories by drawing colorful characters, creating puppets or molding bugs out of clay. The art classroom provides a rich and engaging context for developing and encouraging oral language. Students naturally use and expand their language skills while viewing and discussing fine art.

Every unit is enriched with images from art (artists and their work) and the real world. Background music provides a variety of genres, time periods, and themes to inspire students during studio time.

References: *Explorations in Art*, Davis Publications, Inc., Wilton Art Appreciation CD-ROMs: “Elements of Art”, “Color”, and “Artists at Work.”

Bible

In Second Grade, we center our classrooms on Psalm 145:13 (God is faithful to His promises). Biblical heroes of study are: Moses (humble, courageous, and diligent), Joshua (obedience), Daniel (confidence/faithfulness in God), Job (self-control, patience), Esther (unselfishness, following wise council), Elijah (bold in faith), Jesus (merciful, compassionate), David (repentant, courageous), and Nehemiah (cooperation, boldness).

Weekly scripture memorization includes: Ephesians 6:11-20 (Armor of God), Psalm 119:9-16 (Living by God’s Word), 1 John 4:7-14 (God’s Love and Ours), Ephesians 6:11-20 (Armor of God).

The curriculum for Second Grade is published by Association of Christian Schools International. *The Gospel for Children* by John B. Leuzarder is another resource used for teaching foundational Biblical truths for knowledge of salvation.

History/Social Studies

In Second Grade students continue the study of history and geography through the Pearson Learning Core Knowledge curriculum. Students begin the year learning about immigration and citizenship in the United States. They work with their parents to make an ancestral family tree and learn that the United States population is made up of people from around the world. Additionally, students study the American Government and the Making of the Constitution. In this unit of study, our students will learn about the courageous delegates who wrote the Constitution and the three branches of government they created. The students learn that a democracy is government of the people, by the people, and for the people. Students will research a United States president and learn godly character traits that are important for effective leadership.

Next, our studies turn to the Geography of the Americas. A main focus for this unit is learning the names and locations of the countries in South America. Students will learn map skills and study our neighboring countries, Mexico and Canada. Lastly the students will end the year by learning about our home state of Georgia. We will discuss state and local government and community workers.

We also travel back in time to study Ancient Greece, a country which laid the foundation for many of our own democratic ideals. Students will learn about Greek City-States, the first Olympics, and the Greek’s love for the arts. Students will use their creativity to complete a project that highlights one of their artistic talents.

We will continue our travel around the world by studying about Ancient China and Modern Japan. They will compare and contrast these cultures to our own.

Language Arts

Our language arts program revolves around the use of *Open Court* anthology books to guide students through the following themes: sharing stories, kindness, camouflage animals, courage, our country and its people. New vocabulary in Open Courts stories helps to develop a better understanding of words in context. Students practice visualizing, making connections, answering questions, drawing inferences, and determining the main idea as stories are collectively studied throughout the year. Genres for the year include fantasy, folktale, and realistic fiction. In addition, Second Graders are introduced to non-fiction comprehension based on factual information. Class read alouds are integrated into each day to ensure a literature rich environment. Monthly reading minutes are recorded by individual students and are vital to personal reading growth.

Additionally, a novel study of *Helen Keller* is incorporated into our reading curriculum during the fourth quarter. Experiential learning events include a guest speaker from Vision Rehabilitation Services of Georgia and a service project to raise money for this organization.

Our **spelling** curriculum revolves around *The Purposeful Design* publication; an affiliate of ACSI. Spelling patterns for the year include (though are not limited to) the following: short/long vowel sounds, r controlled vowels, consonant blends, contractions, homophones, singular/plural nouns, prefix/suffix usage, compound words. Also incorporated into the spelling curriculum is knowledge and use of 150 Second Grade core words for spelling (words 151-300). Beginning in the fourth quarter, Wordly Wise is introduced. This curriculum focuses on systematic vocabulary development. Participation in the ACSI Spelling Bee rounds out our emphasis on spelling.

Second Grade follows the *Open Court* Language Arts Handbook for sequential **writing** skills. We begin the year with sentence review: subject/predicate, four types of sentences (declarative, exclamatory, imperative, interrogative), and complete sentence structure. Use of graphic writing organizers, pre-writing drafts, and final editing are components of our writing lessons. Journaling, personal narratives, well-versed paragraphs, and other forms of writing are practiced throughout the year. In preparation for Third Grade, students will begin using more detail in their writing-- descriptive adjectives, figurative language, transition words, as well as stronger beginnings and endings to sentences.

In our **handwriting** curriculum, review of Zaner Bloser printing format is introduced at the beginning of the year. Primary focus is on letter alignment, spacing, neatness, posture, correct paper position, and proper adherence to margins. Zaner Bloser cursive is introduced during third quarter. All 26 upper and lower case letters are taught throughout the year, concluding with students completing assignments in cursive writing by the end of the year.

Library

Searching for books within the online catalog begins. Reference skills include research with encyclopedias and other reference books.

Students are able to check out two books each week and are to make selections from easy books, chapter books, and other non-fiction materials. Students are taught how to find these books by title, author, and subject. Library class time includes "read aloud" opportunities where discussions center around more complex story designs, such as plot, character and theme are introduced.

Math

Skills covered in Second Grade include instruction in the following areas: Number expressions/using variables, place value through 1,000's, number concepts and patterning, problem solving incorporated throughout each chapter of study TINS method (Thought, Information, Number sense, Solution sentence) used for weekly problem solving skills, geometry (plane and solid shapes), addition/subtraction re-grouping to the 100's, counting money/making change, time, fractions and beginning concepts of multiplication/division. Our students continue to hone their math facts 0-18 and to develop their critical thinking skills, relative to math. Students are expected to apply these skills to two- and three-step story problems.

Music

Our Second Grade students continue music literacy development by incorporating traditional notation in reading and performing rhythms. During this school year, students learn about the musical alphabet and recognizing various aspects of melody such as steps, skips, and leaps. Learning about instruments and their families through discussion and multimedia examples is continued throughout the Second Grade.

Physical Education

Our Second Graders continue to demonstrate competency in locomotor movements including gallop, hop, jump, leap, run, skip, slide, and walk. Additionally, emphasis is placed on the non-locomotor skills such as batting, catching, foot dribble, hand dribble, overhand throwing, forehand striking, volleying, dodging/fleeing, passing, shooting, tumbling, etc. Students are introduced to the Presidential Physical Fitness Test and are assessed; achievements include a National and Presidential Award recognition. Nutritionally, the goal for all Second Graders is to be able to identify foods within each food group.

Science

Second Graders begin the year with a study of senses. We then transition into a study of the human body, focusing mainly on the skeletal and muscular systems. Second semester, we begin a unit of study on simple machines. Levers, fulcrums, wheels, and axels are just a few of the intricate parts we investigate throughout this course. As we approach the end of the school year, an exploration of climates and biomes prepare us for an overnight field trip to the Zoo Atlanta.

Hands-on activities and experiments are designed to interest and motivate students throughout each unit of study. Experiential activities include High Tech-High Touch, Slim Good Body, Dunwoody Nature Center and The Georgia Tech Paper Museum. Once again our approach to science is from a Biblical worldview, emphasizing God's handiwork in the world around us.

Spanish

Second Grade students begin the class time with a *Gouin* Series of Five Spanish sentences stating how they prepare for class and how they greet an adult formally (I see my teacher. I open my folder, etc.) They continue to acquire new vocabulary and are exposed to varied verb tenses through the multi-sensory method Total Physical Response (TPR). The *Hola Niño's* story units expand to nationalities, the weather and clothing. A springtime lettuce garden and/or a trip to the Center for Puppetry Arts for a bilingual puppet show add to their experiential learning.

Art

The Third Grade art program is organized around universal themes relevant to students' daily lives. Elements and principles of art, skills and techniques are learned not as isolated concepts, but as tools that help students interpret the ideas of artists and express their own ideas through art.

The Third Grade units are:

- Alone and Together: Students create self-portraits, portraits of people with different facial expressions, and a clay sculpture of the human figure with correct proportions. They learn about life of different artists (Renoir, Cassatt, and Kahlo) as they look and discuss their work.
- Invented Worlds Imagination and Wonder: Students use their imagination to see our world in new creative ways. In this unit they explore and develop ideas and images that show us unexpected and unexplored territories, full of beauty and mystery. Students create imaginary creatures and places as they continue study the theory of color.
- Places and Spaces Architecture in Our Lives: Students learn about different styles of architecture, draw buildings, imagine a castle, carve a sculpture, and plan a park with a playground.
- Forces of Nature Variety and Contrast: Students are delighted by the beauty and endless variety of the world, marvel at changing seasons, and are thrilled by the majesty of nature and humbled by its power. Students create colorful watercolor paintings inspired by Japanese "pictures of the floating world," collages of wild animals and mixed media drawings of landscapes.

Every unit is enriched with images from artists that reflect the real world in order to inspire students.

References: *Explorations in Art*, Davis Publications, Inc. and Wilton Art Appreciation CD-ROMs: "Elements of Art", "Color", and "Artists at Work."

Bible

In the Lower School, we weave the principles of God's Word throughout our entire curriculum; we also teach it intentionally, using Cherie Noel's Positive Action Bible curriculum, Growing with God. Biblical literacy is foundational to a true Christian education; our major goal is to make the Bible meaningful in students' lives. Beginning with factual knowledge of the Trinity, parts of the Bible, the life of Joseph in the Old Testament and progressing through the life of Daniel, each weekly lesson emphasizes the comprehension of Scriptural concepts, as well as life applications. Engaging, relevant stories and character trait activities are designed to help students analyze the principles taught, integrate knowledge into their personal lives, consider various viewpoints, and interpret values. Each week we memorize a new Bible verse and vocabulary and take a quiz on the lesson.

"Sword drills" enhance the students' working knowledge of where to find things in the Bible. Each class leads the Lower School in a Chapel program once a year. These programs give students an opportunity to perform for others and to teach Biblical values in daily living. Every morning, when we pledge allegiance to the Bible, we reiterate our belief in God's "love letter" to us.

Computer/Technology

(In *Failure to Connect: How Computers Affect our Children's Minds – for Better or for Worse*, by Jane Healy, it states that ... "30 years of research on educational technology has produced almost no evidence of a clear link between using computers in the early grades and improved learning." That along with other anecdotal evidence has determined our computer curriculum. Thus, we begin the formal teaching of computer classes in third grade.

Likewise, we do graduate high school students who can have taken AP computer science in our upper school and gain admittance into some of the finest technological schools in the nation.)

Our computer classes begin in Third Grade in order to instill a love of reading, to appreciate hearing good literature read, and to have time for social interaction, both with teachers and students, in the initial lower school grades. After thoroughly understanding Whitefield's Computer Acceptable Agreement policy, and signing it, students in Third Grade accomplish the following skills on Mac laptops, brought into their classrooms: know and name the basic component parts of the computer, learn proper finger placement and practice keyboarding skills, learn the history of the internet, create power point and word documents, and use internet search engines in order to conduct research projects, relative to their school subjects and assignments.

History/Social Studies

The Third Grade social studies curriculum is rich in fundamental knowledge of the history of the world and facilitates learning by making connections between and among well-known events and people. This journey begins with learning the names of all of the countries of Europe, through the use of many tools, such as individual laptop computers. Knowledge of European country locations naturally supports our study of the Ancient Roman Empire, in which students get an overview of each phase of the empire from kings, to the Republic, to emperors. Students learn about daily life in Ancient Rome, key figures in its history, architectural and engineering accomplishments, and reasons for its rise and fall.

Next, through regular classroom learning and a special project, we study the explorers that opened up the New World. Students then get an understanding of life in the American colonies. In addition to these historical eras, our curriculum sets out to inform students about a variety of holidays and their origins: Labor Day, Veteran's Day, MLK Jr. Holiday, Presidents' Day, and Memorial Day. Patriotic songs are learned and appreciation for our men and women in uniform is taught and highly valued. Each year, veterans are invited to be guest speakers. Special letters are written to our veterans, who are being cared for in the Veteran's Administration Hospital in Decatur, and students conduct one-on-one interviews with veterans.

Language Arts

Reading is the cornerstone to all other academic learning; therefore, the primary motivation for teaching children how to read is to enable them to read various genre including, the Bible, short stories, chapter books and novels. By using a variety of reading strategies to comprehend, interpret, analyze, and evaluate what he or she reads in order to align with a Biblical worldview. Based on our goal of teaching our students to read for the purpose of gaining knowledge and understanding, spiritual discernment, a sense of enjoyment, and laying the groundwork for academic success, our program consists of application of explicit comprehension skills, responding to reading by writing, and practicing fluency. The novels we choose reflect a standard of time-tested and/or quality literature. Each one possesses themes which inspire students to take the high road in their individual life journeys. In addition, through these novels, vocabulary is built and strengthened, oral reading skills are practiced, comprehension/retention skills are assessed. Our study of a novel, for example *Charlotte's Web* is enhanced through experiential learning, with a field trip to an actual working farm.

We teach and apply explicit skills through direct instruction, such as making an inference, determining the sequence of events, and finding the main idea. These are reading skills that students can apply broadly to many other disciplines. We also seek to strengthen oral reading skills through exercises that increase fluency, such as chunking or voice inflection as determined by punctuations. Our philosophy drives a curriculum which supports

helping students graduate from learning to reading, to reading to learn. Lastly, Third Grade students complete summer reading requirements before entering their Fourth Grade year.

Third Grade **spelling** begins with an emphasis on Core Words (each grade level in the lower school has its own unique list of 150 words). These words are “core” based on their frequency of usage in students’ everyday writing. These words were determined by a committee of Whitefield teachers, and are not considered the same as words on other lists, such as the Dolch Sight Word List. Students are expected to spell these words correctly within everyday assignments. In addition to the Core Word List, students regularly learn and practice words that contain a particular letter, sound, or structure pattern. This provides the explicit phonics component of the curriculum.

Our Third Grade **writing** curriculum builds upon the Power Writing foundation that began in grades K-2, in which students master writing paragraphs that include topic sentences and supporting details. Now, students progress to putting paragraphs together to produce well-developed narratives. Students are first introduced to author’s techniques through reading a variety of short stories, in order to begin to appreciate how authors accomplish a particular mood or tone. Next, students learn other techniques that enhance the style of their writing; i.e. learning to expand a moment, using repetition for effect, creating hyphenated modifiers, etc. Once that groundwork is laid, students begin the writing process of planning a story, writing a first draft, proofreading-editing-revising, and writing a second and final draft. There are six main criteria used to assess writing: overall development, organization of writing, support, sentence structure, word choice, and mechanics. These criteria are based on the Writing Assessment Program (*WrAP*) available from the Educational Records Bureau. Third Grade students are assessed each spring using the *WrAP* narrative assessment. Writing in the Third Grade is a challenging journey that equips each student with a new set of skills and a sense of confidence with their writing proficiency.

Building a rich **vocabulary** base in Third Grade is supported by using the systematic approach found in the Wordly Wise curriculum. We strive to instill in our students a love for words and the way in which they are used in the English language. Additional words are supplied by the content areas, such as the Bible, Science, Reading, Math, and Social Studies. The dictionary and thesaurus are popular books in our classrooms! Additionally, we encourage learning from context clues, using prefixes, suffixes, and root words, and applying meanings in a variety of ways. The ability to speak, hear, and comprehend words is given to us by God in order to bring glory to Him.

Building on the foundation laid in Second Grade, cursive **handwriting** is reviewed intensely the first two weeks of Third Grade. After that, cursive handwriting is assessed through the spelling curriculum all throughout the year. All assignments and homework are completed in cursive throughout the remainder Third Grade.

The Shurley English curriculum is used to teach **grammar** in Third Grade. Students begin learning the eight parts of speech by chanting jingles, which incorporate the definitions. Rhythm, rhyme and movement enhance learning and retention of basic grammar concepts. In classifying sentences with the Question and Answer Flow, critical thinking is developed. This is an oral class activity in which students ask questions to determine how each word is used in the sentence. Written exercises provide opportunities to practice new concepts and apply capitalization and punctuation rules.

Library

Our students gain more independence in Third Grade as they are encouraged to search for and locate books on their own by employing their knowledge of the Dewey Decimal organizational structure of the library. Table of contents and indexes are explained and guide words are used to find information and topics. Students are able to cite bibliographic information from a book.

Math

Whitefield’s Third Grade math curriculum is designed not only to enable students to master the foundational knowledge and skills of mathematics, but to progress in applying more complex mathematical concepts. For example, students transition from identifying a simple shape such as square, to classifying that square as quadrilateral, parallelogram, polygon, and a type of rectangle.

We build upon the foundations of place value, rounding and estimation, money concepts, addition/subtraction, fractions, geometry, probability, measurement of time, temperature, length, weight, and capacity, and problem solving strategies. These concepts are presented in a significantly more in-depth manner than in the earlier primary grades. Basic multiplication facts up to 12x12 are presented, practiced, and memorized early in the year. Quick recall of these facts is critical to success with multiplying larger numbers and performing long division, both of which are essential parts of the Third Grade math curriculum. Manipulatives are utilized to teach or to enhance the understanding of concepts, and individual laptop computers and the Smart Board allow for interactive opportunities when learning or practicing skills.

Music

The Third Grade year is a culmination of skills and knowledge taught in PreK through Second Grade, resulting in our students’ opportunity to learn a “beginners” musical instrument—the recorder. A regular week-to-week lesson book is given to students along with incremental, achievement-based solos. Class time is spent developing correct playing technique and learning repertoire that demonstrates various musical concepts.

Physical Education

Our goal of physical education in Third Grade is to transfer motor skill and patterns into movements necessary for modified game play. Emphasis is placed on responsible personal and social behavior during physical activity including proper sportsmanlike conduct, compassion for others, best effort, self-control, following directions, cooperation, and constructive competition. The Presidential Physical Fitness Test is used to assess fitness status. Track competition is introduced and the top athletes in track/field are selected to compete against other schools in a full day track meet. Nutrition education continues to focus on food groups, determining portion sizes and habits for healthy eating to “fuel” your body for physical fitness.

Science

The basis for our study of the world in Science in Third Grade is this: God has created everything and sustains it . . . We use the Discovery Works Science curriculum, Concordia Edition, to explore four major topics:

- Life Cycles of Animals – three stage and four stage life cycles
- Life Cycles of Plants – three parts of a seed, pollination, evergreens and conifers, and plant seedlings
- Sun, Moon, and Earth – features of the moon, astronomers, telescopes and probes, astronauts, sun as a star, rotation and revolution of Earth, tides, gravity, seasons, and lunar and solar eclipses
- Earth’s Water – the water cycle and water resources, caves and their formation

Students become familiar with various methods of researching such as classification, inferencing, hypothesizing, and understanding properties. Hands-on activities and experiments enhance the conceptualizations of these four units. Our culminating activity is the trip to DeSoto Caverns, where we spend the night in a 300-foot cave, learning about how water and limestone shaped the structure.

Spanish

Third Graders open each class with a *Gouin Series* of Six Spanish sentences (“I greet my teacher. I ask my teacher.” “How are you?” etc.) After some basic conversation and number drills, three volunteers lead the class in learning new gestures with new vocabulary in past and present tenses via the Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPRS) style. They role-play, answer questions, read, write, and draw their way through Volume 1 of the *Cuentame Gabi Series* (about the misadventures of a crazy cat). A highlight is getting a pen pal at the Fundación Amor y Esperanza (Foundation of Love and Hope School) in Quito, Ecuador and creating bilingual cards and letters, which connects back to the Kindergarten service project and forward to the annual Upper School Ecuador Mission Trip.

4TH GRADE

Art

The fourth grade art program is organized around universal themes relevant to students’ daily lives. These themes help students make meaningful connections to artworks across time and place. Students create original artworks as they explore the ways artists think and work, and as they learn to perceive, think, talk and write about art.

The Fourth Grade units are:

- **Appearances: Looking At Our world:** Students learn to look very carefully at our world and practice contour and gesture drawings, create a wire sculpture, paint a landscape from a bird’s-eye view, and a colorful still-life composition.
- **Presenting Places: The Human Landscape:** Students review the elements of art: line, shape, texture, color, and space, while drawing dream rooms, and designing dream houses and colorful towns. They learn about dwellings of Anasazi Indians, Ancient Greece architecture, and Frank Lloyd Wright.
- **Nature’s Gifts:** Students look to wild and tame creatures in nature for ideas, paint a natural habitat, use materials found in nature (clay) to make coil pots.
- **Traditions: Our Artistic Heritage:** Students understand that traditions are the living history of the human race. Traditions are vital and dynamic, reflecting over time the changes in the cultures that celebrate them. They’ll create “molas” in the style of Kuna Indians, “batiks” inspired by the art of Indonesia, and papier-mâché masks looking at the African examples. This unit has strong geography cross-curricular connections.
- **Imagination: Invention and Abstraction:** Students learn that challenges inspire human creativity. Artists challenge themselves to see their worlds in new different ways, using their creativity to show us, through their artworks, unique and innovative interpretations of everyday scenes and familiar objects. Students create imaginary clay sculptures, paint abstract trees, and draw animals.

Every unit is enriched with images from art and the real world. Students create vocabulary cards as they learn to talk about art.

References: *Explorations in Art*, Davis Publications, Inc., Wilton Art Appreciation CD-ROMs, and Davis “Compare and Contrast” CD-ROM

Bible

Fourth Graders will explore the life of Christ from the Gospels, a study of the Holy Spirit, and a study of the life of Paul as they examine Acts and the Epistles. Weekly Scripture memory, life application activities, and vocabulary help ensure a life-long appreciation and knowledge of God’s Word. Students apply Biblical principles as they

prepare and lead a chapel program for the Lower School student body. Fourth Graders will also lead a service project within our community and exhibit compassion and the love of God.

In Fourth Grade Bible, students will find knowledge, wisdom, and understanding for themselves from the Word of God. The curriculum helps establish each student in the Word so that he/she can begin to find answers for themselves. While it is important to begin with the factual knowledge of the Scriptures, we believe that students need to grow in wisdom and understanding. At Whitefield, we want to guide each student to comprehend, discern, apply, analyze, and evaluate a variety of concepts. An intimate study of Scripture helps them form personal convictions and develop strong character.

Computer/Technology

In Fourth Grade, students continue to use the Mac laptops to hone their keyboarding skills and increase their typing speed. Their appreciation of and respect for the world-wide-web grows as they realize the significant role technology plays in our “flat” world. Inherent in this virtual world, students learn to make wise choices writing e-mails and surfing the web. Keyboarding skills are practiced as students continue to make internet research activities relevant to their classroom assignments. The connection between practicing the skill and engaging the tool, as a form of learning, becomes a reality in the Fourth Grade.

History/Social Studies

Fourth Graders study both the world around them, in general and then an in-depth study of the United States regions. Through geography, students reinforce their knowledge of both the United States and Georgia history. We learn about the landforms, climate, plants, animals, history, and other important characteristics of each region and the contributions these regions make to both our economy and government. Students study the states and capitals, Central America, and the Caribbean. Fourth Graders investigate the following: the American Revolution; Trail of Tears; Slavery; the Civil War; Reconstruction; World War I and II; the U.S. Government; and the Rights and Responsibilities of the American People. Students study economic concepts that include the role of the consumer and producer; profit and loss; as well as Georgia’s economy. We will examine the state of Georgia as we focus on Georgia’s past and present. Other experiential learning includes trips to Stone Mountain’s American Indian Festival and Pow Wow, and the Driftwood Education Center on Saint Simons Island.

Language Arts

Students build on **grammar** learned in Third Grade, by continuing the use of The Shurley English Curriculum. Students are active participants as different aspects of English are learned and explored. Each lesson builds upon prior lessons, making the pace of learning quite rigorous. A focus on vocabulary and analogies is prevalent throughout each chapter and classroom practices, chapter checkups, and tests provide immediate feedback on each student’s progress. Some of the unique features of the Shurley English method include the following:

- Jingles: Definitions to the parts of speech are taught in jingle/chant form. This style of learning improves memory and makes learning more enjoyable.
- Question and Answer Flow: Students use a systematic approach to sentence “dissection” by asking questions to determine the role of each word in the sentence. This process is done orally in a group environment and helps the student analyze sentence patterns, sentence types, and the context of the various words within a sentence.
- Practice and Revised Sentences: In order to write more fluently and use complex sentences, students are given daily practice through revision and review.

- **Writing:** Fourth Graders use the knowledge of sentence structure to form paragraphs and then to expand to narrative essays. Students learn the steps of prewriting, writing rough drafts, revising, editing, writing final papers, and publishing. Shurley English supports our writing curriculum to help students produce eloquent five paragraph writing pieces.

Students experience **reading** through many avenues to help them learn, analyze, and appreciate a variety of resources, while developing a love for reading. Fourth Graders do novel studies with books of various genres; fiction and non-fiction. Students learn both as a class and individually, as they explore these books, recognize symbolism, and make life connections together. They learn to distinguish events and characters in texts, discussing how they relate to both the secular and Christian worldview. Students experience God’s greatness by observing the talents and craft of writers. These observations are applied during writing workshops as they share their own craft with other students. Additionally, we study strategies to master comprehension skills that will enhance their foundation for success in reading, as well as other subjects.

Through learning **vocabulary** and the correct **spelling** of words, students develop a richer knowledge of English words and their meanings. Fourth Graders use the *Wordly Wise 3000* series, published by Educators Publishing Service for vocabulary development. They receive spelling lists based on novels studied in class. Spelling is systematically taught using phonetic rules and spelling patterns which are then included into their composition writing pieces. The Wordly Wise curriculum helps expose our students to a wide variety of vocabulary terms. There are also online practice activities which engage the students in the learning process. The student lessons involve reading passages, while using context clues to determine meanings.

Fourth Graders learn the art of expressing their thoughts through **writing**. They focus on narrative writing throughout the year. Students will learn to brainstorm and organize their thoughts in order to begin the writing process. They will learn how to solidify the parts of a sentence, how to use a dictionary and a thesaurus to get rid of “worn out words” and enhance their writing, and how to go back and edit their own work. Strong focus on development, organization, support, sentence structure, word choice, and writing mechanics are practiced throughout the year. They will also master a five paragraph essay by the end of Fourth Grade. Fourth Graders’ writing is assessed through the WrAP Writing Assessment in the spring.

Upon entering Fourth Grade, students are expected to know how to use competent cursive **handwriting**. Proper handwriting is expected in all subjects and is assessed in writing pieces and on daily work.

Library

Mastering book selection skills take place throughout the Fourth Grade year. Students become comfortable and proficient using the online catalog. They are able to connect spine labels with call numbers and can locate materials in the fiction, non-fiction and reference sections of the library. Reference skills expand as students compare atlases to globes and use indexes and tables of contents to locate states, countries, continents, the poles, and the equator. Listening and comprehension skills increase as books are read over a period of weeks. Discussion of plot, characters, and theme becomes more in-depth. The various genres are discussed as students select personal reading materials.

Math

The primary goal of Fourth Grade math is to build upon the foundational base of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Through hands-on activities, technology integration, manipulatives, and real life situations, math concepts are practiced and mastered. Students will learn key strategies and problem-solving skills

as they work individually, with partners, and in cooperative groups, exploring new ways to use reasoning skills. Fourth Graders will also focus on comparing and ordering numbers, decimals, estimating, fractions, integers and rational numbers, mixed numbers, place value, algebra, measurement, geometry, working with money, and other mathematical strategies. Participation in the Math Olympics (grades 3-5) is a capstone for our highly successful mathematicians.

Music

Fourth Grade students continue to learn many of the themes introduced in previous years which include delving deeper into instrument learning, reading music, as well as listening and watching high quality music. Students begin to construct meaning in the areas of classical and modern music history by sequentially learning about major periods of musical development, classical composers, and modern music genres and events. Composition is another major topic covered in the Fourth Grade curriculum. Using a computer-based curriculum, *Groovy Music*, students construct original compositions with the help of pre-recorded loops and self-written examples.

Physical Education

Fourth Grade physical education continues to develop skill proficiency while practicing and performing drills and playing modified games. Our goal is that students will demonstrate competency in knowledge, activity and fitness objectives; including the benefits of physical activity, aerobic activity, abdominal/lower back strength, arm/shoulder strength, and hip/lower back flexibility. We continue our health and nutrition education throughout this grade, with more emphasis on establishing life skills and daily habits.

Science

In the study of science we learn more about our God and our world through enlightening activities and lessons. Our curriculum is based on a distinctively Christian perspective, building all lessons on the foundation of God's Word. Students learn science concepts most effectively by exploring concrete examples recording observations; making predictions and drawing conclusions through textbooks, technology integration and active experimentation. Fourth Graders will learn about the earth's land resources, fossil fuels, conservation, properties of matter, chemical and physical changes, animal behaviors, animal adaptations, vertebrates and invertebrates, magnetic fields, electric circuits, electrical currents, weather patterns, weather processes, air pressure, and seasons and climate. Students will have an opportunity to visit the Driftwood Education Center, located on St. Simons Island, for a two-night, three-day experiential immersion into the study of animal life and culture. During this time, students get to dissect a fish, explore ocean life on the beach, and hold reptiles. In addition, this trip creates a wonderful atmosphere for the students to work cooperatively and form stronger relationships with their fellow classmates.

Spanish

Fourth Grade students open class with the Padre Nuestro (Our Father) prayer and basic conversation. Students continue to acquire high-frequency Spanish vocabulary through Total Physical Response Storytelling, where students answer a multitude of questions and provide creative details as their classmates act out the stories with a simple prop. Speaking, reading and writing skills are practiced with Volume 2 of the *Cuentame Gabi* series. Performing favorite episodes of the book in small groups, to be videoed, builds student confidence. An upbeat, rhythmic chanting of verbs is introduced to help students discover the patterns of Spanish. Staying in touch with their Ecuadorian pen pals through our bilingual letters is an important cultural connection.

Art

The Fifth Grade art program builds upon the elements of art: line, shape, color, and form, and principles of design: unity, rhythm, proportion, balance, and variety. Students refine their drawing, painting, and sculpting skills to create the artworks of their own while interpreting artworks made by others and exploring ideas, materials and techniques in this process.

They are encouraged to develop ideas for artwork and to use media expressively.

The Fifth Grade units are:

- **People and Their Stories:** Students will practice drawing realistic portraits, people in different poses, and create papier-mâché figures of people in motion.
- **Surprises: Materials and Forms:** Students experiment with new ideas, materials, and forms. They create photo and paper collages, and imaginative sculpture from found objects.
- **Getting Close to Nature:** Students understand that art helps people appreciate draw realistic flowers, patterned animals, create an abstract watercolor painting to express nature’s mood, and make an animal sculpture from clay.
- **A World of Wonder: Art and Imagination:** Students understand that art helps us to visualize and give form to our imaginations. They create a perspective drawing of outer space, a painting with dreamlike qualities, and a foil relief sculpture of a mythical creature.
- **Sharing: Communication** in which students understand that art is a way for people to share their thoughts, feelings, and ideas through a variety of forms and media. They create stories in motion, practice the art of calligraphy, and create a set of symbols to represent different aspects of time spent at school and scroll-like paintings inspired by Asian art.

The program includes CD-ROMs with art images and information about artists to support lessons and concepts. Music CDs have a variety of genres, time periods and themes to inspire students during studio time. Students create a collection of vocabulary cards to enhance their language skills while viewing and discussing fine art.

References: *Explorations in Art*, Davis Publications, Inc. and Wilton Art Appreciation CD-ROMs: “Elements of Art”, “Color”, “Art Adventures”, and “Artists at Work”.

Bible

The core of the Fifth Grade Bible curriculum is a comprehensive study of the Old Testament. Beginning in Genesis, students will explore Old Testament stories and gain a clear picture of how they fit together and how they direct us towards Jesus Christ. Each lesson includes a principle based on the life of a Bible character. Life application questions at the end of each lesson ask students to analyze information, draw conclusions, and personalize the Biblical principles taught during that week.

One goal of our Bible curriculum is for each student to allow the Holy Spirit to work in his or her life to become more like Jesus Christ. Character trait activities help students relate to people within the Old Testament by showing practical ways of applying Biblical principles to their daily lives. Memorization of weekly scripture verses helps each student internalize God’s Word as they grow in their walk with Him. Students will be challenged to live out their faith by engaging in effective prayer, exhibiting qualities of leadership for both classmates and younger students, and by taking part in an annual service project.

Computer/Technology

Fifth Graders continue to develop their proficiency and their creativity as they use technology. Students create presentations, incorporating a minimum of fifteen slides. Students work collaboratively with one another to share their knowledge and expertise while further honing their keyboarding and research skills. Finally, the Lower School technology experiences create an appreciation for the virtual possibilities that are becoming the hallmarks of 21st century learning.

History/ Social Studies

The Fifth Grade social studies curriculum focuses on the history of the United States. Students begin the year by exploring the factors that led up to the European settlement of America; as we study the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Age of Exploration, and Maya, Aztec, and Inca Civilizations. Other topics include the American Revolution, the U.S. Constitution, the Civil War, Reconstruction, Westward Expansion, and the 20th Century. Heavy emphasis is placed on the Christian foundations of our nation. Students learn about Christian influences in Renaissance art, the importance of the printing press in spreading the Gospel throughout Europe during the Reformation, and the passion for missions that motivated many of the first explorers. Additionally, students learn specifically about the Christian faith of the founding fathers, reflected in the creation key of historical documents of our nation such as the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution. The Fifth Grade social studies curriculum uses the *Pearson Learning Core Knowledge* textbook.

The geography portion of the curriculum focuses on having students identify and locate all of the countries in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. Students complete a geography unit reviewing the names and locations of all 50 states. Students are able to use laptops and Smart Board exercises to prepare for weekly geography quizzes.

Students will also learn how to write a research paper as they complete the Famous Folks project and the Historical Reporter Project. Throughout the curriculum, Fifth Graders take part in several learning activities including Inca relay races, Revolutionary Tug of War, a field trip to the Atlanta Cyclorama, class “visits” from historical figures, and speakers focusing on World War II, the Cold War, and the Civil Rights Movement.

Language Arts

The Fifth Grade **reading** curriculum is based on teaching reading for the purpose of reading for fun and for understanding. Students learn reading comprehension skills through novels, short stories, teacher read-alouds and periodicals. Our four novel studies of the year are *Hinds’ Feet on High Places*, *Behind Rebel Lines*, *Call It Courage*, and *Number the Stars*. Students identify the main idea, summarize, inference, draw conclusions, sequence, define words in context, and relate text to the world/self or other text.

Composition writing in Fifth Grade is a process of learning how to construct eloquent sentences while organizing a well structured five paragraph essay. The six components of writing that students develop throughout the year include the following: overall development, organization, support, sentence structure, word choice, and mechanics. In addition to constructing essays, students learn to identify and demonstrate an understanding of various forms of poetry during our month-long poetry unit. The celebration of the unit is a “poetry café” where students share their own illustrated poetry books. Students also enjoy expressing creativity through daily journal writing.

The Fifth Grade **grammar** curriculum is integrated with our composition writing, through the use of the Shurley English, to understand grammar rules and to practice editing skills. Throughout the year, students learn five patterns of sentence structure, subject nouns and pronouns, transitive verbs, prepositional phrases, direct objects,

indirect objects, linking verbs, predicate nouns and adjectives, articles, adverbs, and adjectives. By labeling the various parts of speech, students understand how sentences are formed and can become more eloquent writers.

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 Houghton Mifflin textbook. Study 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.