



CURRICULUM GUIDE



**THE
SAN FRANCISCO
SCHOOL**

INTRODUCTION

Founded in 1966, The San Francisco School is a preschool through 8th grade independent day school. Our progressive approach to education encourages children to develop self-reliance, solid academic skills, integrity, and a sense of social values. The School is respected for its strong academics, vibrant community, and personal attention to students. SFS graduates are academically prepared, inquisitive, compassionate, and eager for the challenges ahead.

The Preschool program uses a hands-on, play-based approach to learning. There are separate classes for 3- and 4-year-olds, with both involving a high level of student choice in thoughtfully prepared, developmentally appropriate activities. The program instills a foundation of independence and social awareness. The preschool program both introduces students to the foundational principles of academia and exposes 3- and 4-year-old students to experiences dedicated to their social-emotional development.

The Elementary School program is thoughtfully designed to embody our mission and lay the foundation for critical academic skills in reading and writing, mathematics, social studies, science and engineering, Spanish, music and performing arts, visual arts, and health and wellness. It is founded on the belief that children must have meaningful experiences to learn deeply, and it takes into account developmental stages and individual learning paces, seeking to differentiate instruction wherever possible, and crafting lessons that incorporate multiple modalities as well as social-emotional learning and themes of social justice.

The Middle School program builds on the foundations laid in the preschool and elementary programs, with age-appropriate increased academic expectations layered with the same joyous sense of learning that infuses the younger grades. Middle Schoolers take deep dives into integrated reading, writing, and humanities; mathematics; science and engineering classes; Spanish, music/performing arts, visual arts, and health and wellness; a wide variety of electives; and social-emotional learning experiences through supportive advisory groups and class meetings. As they enter middle school, they learn practices of an effective learner, study habits, time management, organizational strategies, self-advocacy, and goal setting in a dedicated skills class.

As the School strives to help each student reach their potential, it equips students with the essential skills and qualities of life-long learners: the ability to persist when challenged, to ask and consider difficult questions, to problem-solve both independently and cooperatively, to communicate effectively, to self-reflect, and to advocate for themselves and others.

This Curriculum Guide outlines the academic program from Kindergarten through 8th grade. It is a snapshot of the School's ever-evolving program, documenting current curriculum in broad strokes. The School's talented master teachers continually refine the curriculum in response to current educational research and best practices.



MISSION STATEMENT

The San Francisco School cultivates and celebrates the intellectual, imaginative, and humanitarian promise of each student in a community that practices mutual respect, embraces diversity, and inspires a passion for learning.



EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

At The San Francisco School, we believe students learn best when the following tenets are an integral part of their experience:

Curiosity. Students are natural explorers. We encourage students to ask meaningful questions and structure experiences for them to arrive at their own moments of discovery.

Challenge. Students take great pleasure in progressing toward mastery. We cultivate learning by designing lessons with varied and increasing complexity.

Collaboration. Students grow through working with others. We model and teach teamwork, cooperation, and problem solving across grades and disciplines.

Courage. Students are empowered when they face their fears. We urge students to take risks and embrace their mistakes.

Compassion. Students are capable of astonishing kindness and empathy. We inspire students to think beyond themselves and believe that their actions make a difference.





CORE SUBJECTS

The hallmark of a San Francisco School education is engaged, creative thinking with a love of challenge and a passion for humanitarianism. Students not only learn the academic subjects they study, but also make connections between them in order to problem-solve, analyze, and innovate with real-world applications.

Reading and Writing

SFS develops strong writers with a passion for literature and an ease with words. Literacy begins in the earliest grades with a print- and language-rich environment. As they progress through the elementary and middle school years, students learn the fundamentals of reading alongside strategies for deep comprehension and critical interpretation. They read novels, short stories, non-fiction, and poetry selected from classic and contemporary literature that represents diverse voices. They use a social-cultural critical lens and literary analysis skills to examine characters and themes to make connections beyond the texts. The School uses the *Writers Workshop* model in K-8th grade which encourages students to think of themselves as writers and take their writing seriously. The upper school program fosters a “writer identity,” and based on *Wordly Wise*, students become writers who can hone their craft for varied audiences in a wide range of styles and genres.

Mathematics

Since mathematics is a lens through which the world is examined, students are provided meaningful, authentic contexts for mathematical work. Math is a process that can be revised and reflected upon, using group work as an opportunity for students to collaborate, to thoughtfully evaluate their work, and to see mistakes as opportunities for growth. We value risk taking and the willingness to confront the unknown, encouraging students to learn to use multiple approaches when problem-solving. The curricula used are *Contexts for Learning Mathematics* (elementary) and *Illustrative Mathematics* by Open Up Resources (middle school). The SFS program aligns with the Common Core standards for mathematics, and incorporates algebraic thinking even in the youngest grades.

Social Studies

The social studies program seeks to foster critical thinking, compassion, global citizenship, and an understanding of how historical and current events shape the world. At the core of the program is a study of the people and choices that have determined the course of history, and what can be learned from them to inform one’s own actions. In younger grades, social studies is approached in interdisciplinary, project-based units, using a wide variety of primary sources, age-appropriate non-fiction texts, historical fiction, and technology-based resources. In middle school, through an integrated humanities program, students use the study of geography, religion, achievements, politics, economics, and social structures as a lens to study the history of people in other societies as well as that of the United States.

Science, Technology, and Engineering

The curriculum ignites curiosity and passion for scientific experimentation with hands-on labs, simulations, games, and projects to develop skills of investigation, observation, data analysis, discussion, and experimental design.

The younger grades have outdoor STEAM classes as well as interdisciplinary, inquiry-based projects. The 4th and 5th grades are taught in tandem, alternating each year. One year focuses on electricity, computer science, and human anatomy and physiology; the other focuses on the deep sea to outer space, earth and physical science. In middle school, interactive classes provide a foundation for more complex scientific concepts. 7th and 8th grade subjects are also taught in tandem and alternate between physical science and life science. Technology and mathematics are increasingly integrated. The goal is for all students to be knowledgeable and informed innovators and problem-solvers.

Spanish

The Spanish program is designed to be a spiral curriculum of recurring thematic units over the years with increasing complexity, vocabulary depth, and detail. Students develop oral expression and comprehension, reading, and writing skills. The curriculum features projects in each grade that are developed in collaboration with classroom teachers for integrated, cross-curricular learning. In middle school, Spanish classes are differentiated by proficiency level for heritage and Spanish-immersion students as well as students who are new to the language.

Music and Performing Arts

Music classes are based on the Orff Schulwerk philosophy, an approach to education that seeks to involve all children in communal music making with an emphasis on creation and play. The mallet percussion instruments are the foundation by which all students experience the program. Students are also offered opportunities to learn to play additional instruments. In the Orff approach, music class includes movement, dance, poetry, and regular connections to visual arts and other academic disciplines. Also a part of Orff Schulwerk, drama classes develop improvisation and acting skills, including theater tech and production.

Visual Arts

Visual arts classes develop individual potential and social awareness, as well as foster spatial awareness, fine motor skills, a sense of aesthetics, and so much more. A wide variety of artistic approaches and media are incorporated to help students realize their potential. Students focus on process over product while still keeping an eye toward the importance of completing and refining work. Projects are interdisciplinary and infused with problem-solving skills alongside artistic techniques.

Health and Wellness

The Health and Wellness program allows students to experience joy through physical and social activity, build character through competition and conflict resolution, and develop a life-long appreciation of fitness and wellness. The curriculum allows for diverse learners to safely challenge themselves. Early grades start by building a foundation of cooperation, taking turns, solving problems, and gross motor skills. As students progress through middle school, they engage in increasingly complex competitive and cooperative games, team sports, physical fitness challenges, and peer coaching.





CROSS-DISCIPLINARY LITERACIES

In addition to the Core Subjects, there are complex skill sets that are critical for students to thrive in this era of advanced technology. Taught at every point of the curriculum trajectory, these literacies are reinforced consistently throughout the student's SFS experience.

Technology and Digital Citizenship

Since *The Strategic Plan: Living Our Humanitarian Promise*, the science, technology, engineering, arts, and math (STEAM) programs have been a priority. Reflecting the School's core values, technology and engineering instruction is frequently provided with an interdisciplinary approach where students are encouraged to find intersections of technology with other areas like visual arts, music, math, writing, history, current events, and more.

Building on the empathy and interpersonal skills developed during the preschool and kindergarten years, early elementary students understand the connection between real life social relationships and their online behavior; they begin to consider responsible and respectful use of tech with intermittent use of devices in class; they learn the need to balance screen time with other activities. In upper elementary school, topics such as online safety, cyberbullying, privacy, digital footprints, news, and media literacy are taught. These lessons are reinforced in more sophisticated and complex ways in middle school as students increase their technology use and digital presence.

Throughout their SFS experience, our students are not only safe, ethical consumers of technology – they are tech creators with a focus on meaningful design. They graduate with confidence in photo and video collection and editing, graphic arts, 3D design, animation, podcasting, and musical composition. Additionally, all of our students are exposed to computational thinking each year. The younger grades focus on human coding and the creation of basic algorithms like recipes and walking instructions, while drag-and-drop coding and robotics is experienced throughout upper elementary. In middle school, students explore a variety of coding languages, physical computing, and tools and strategies for data collection, visualization, and analysis. Middle schoolers also study emerging topics such as artificial intelligence and how algorithmic thinking is connected to social media, business, and society.

Social Emotional Literacy

The teaching of empathy, compassion, and communication has always been a cornerstone of the SFS program. Beginning in preschool, development of student character begins with building relationships with teachers and peers; while learning how to be “a good friend in the community,” the inevitable conflicts are facilitated through the restorative Peace Process.

Throughout the K-8th grade social emotional learning (SEL) program, students continue to build skills in five core competencies:

- self-reflection and awareness
- social awareness
- self-regulation
- responsible decision making
- healthy relationships

Students learn to recognize and name their own as well as others' emotions, build skills that aid in self-regulation and metacognitive thinking, practice making ethical choices based on community and societal norms, learn strategies for facing adversity, and engage in conflict resolution.

While there is specific focus on SEL at all levels of the SFS program, the teaching of empathy is frequently integrated across disciplines. Research based programs and frameworks that allow students to identify and assess their learning strengths or partnerships with organizations such as the Mosaic Project are utilized with leadership and support from the K-4th Grade Educational Therapist/SEL Educator, Upper School Counselor, and the Learning Services staff.

Cultural Competency and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice

The SFS mission describes a community that practices mutual respect and embraces diversity. Our students develop awareness of and knowledge about differences, an inclusive and appreciative attitude, and the skills to build understanding between people. This begins early in elementary school as students engage in an exploration of self and identity and a simultaneous study of world traditions. In upper elementary school, the program focuses on the individual's place within a multicultural society, and middle school students examine these relationships further while leading school-wide celebrations of heritage and culture. In accordance with our mission, we prepare our students to address injustice, racism, and inequity.





KINDERGARTEN



Reading and Writing

Reading: Identify all upper/lower-case letters and corresponding sounds; identify rhyming in poems, stories, and songs; recognize common sight and high-frequency words; decode words with phonics knowledge and contextual clues; make predictions about stories; identify characters; describe a story with details; recognize fiction vs. nonfiction; begin to read using a variety of primers and nonfiction materials

Writing: Phonemic (best-guess) spelling using sound letter knowledge to spell simple words; compose text with drawings, dictation, and writing; conventions of print (left-to-right; top-to bottom; simple punctuation; one-finger spacing between words; proper pencil grip); begin writing in complete sentences; write in all uppercase letters; exposure to writing with lowercase letters; use *Writers Workshop* in writing styles: persuasive (writing to make the world a better place), procedural (how-to books), narrative writing (true stories), and informational (*Show and Tell* and *All About* books)

Selected Projects and Texts: *I Can Read*; *Primary Phonics*; *Handwriting Without Tears*; *Sound of the Week* books



Mathematics

Number and Operations: One-to-one correspondence with objects and count to 20; fluently add to 10; count to 100 by ones and by tens; compare numbers (more/less than, equal to); understand concepts of addition/subtraction and represent them through drawing; exposure to standard symbols and language (+, -, =); explain mathematical thinking and ideas

Geometry and Measurement: Compare simple 2D shapes and 3D forms; sort and compare objects according to attributes; use non-standard tools to measure various lengths; measure volume through baking tools

Data Analysis: Recognize/create patterns; simple graphs



Social Studies

Topics: Identity, families, and communities (*All About Me* and *All About Us*); activism (who is an activist and what do they do)

Skills: Be a good friend in the classroom community; consider what communities need and what makes a good community member; understand identity and personal power; read and learn oral stories from around the world

Selected Projects and Texts: Bird's eye view maps: classroom, yard, and bedrooms; walking neighborhood field trips (local library, fire station, McLaren Park, etc.)



Science, Technology, and Engineering

Topics: Living things (learn about the needs/wants of plants, animals, and humans; embryology (study how embryos grow and develop))

Skills: Observe; explore; hypothesize; create and read graphs; ask questions based on observations to find more information about the natural and human-made world; create scientific drawings of various living and nonliving things

Selected Projects and Texts: Hatching chicks/ducklings; silkworm study



Spanish

Annual Units: Latin Heritage Month; Día de los Muertos; calendar; seasons and weather; animals; anatomy; numbers and colors; emotions; cultural celebrations

Special Projects and Cross-Curricular Units: Emotions; fruits/vegetables; parts of the body; life cycle of a chicken; animals; farm



Music and Performing Arts

Concepts and Rhythm: Expressive opposites (high/low, slow/fast, smooth/staccato, loud/soft, etc.); beat, pulse, and meter through games; movement activities; simple dances; visual notation

Voice and Instruments: Singing games; songs; basic ear-training exercises, percussion (body, hand, mallet, and small percussion)

Movement and Drama: Creative movement exercises; simple folk dances; clapping games; acting out stories and short narrated plays



Visual Arts

Topics and Skills: Color mixing (primary/secondary); clay pinch pots (slip and score); study elements of art (line, shape, color, texture); consider concepts of "big to small" and how shapes relate to one another

Sample Projects: Coil pots; African guinea fowl; color wheels; complementary color fish prints



Health and Wellness

Topics and Skills: Motor skills; movement patterns; cooperation/teamwork; spatial awareness; taking turns; practice sharing; listen to multilayer instruction

1ST GRADE



Reading and Writing

Reading: Solidify and extend phonics skills; build comprehension and stamina using “just right” books; understand story structure and retell stories; read across genres; question, connect, infer, and synthesize; develop identity as a reader

Writing: *Writers Workshop* in multiple genres: personal narrative, fiction, formal letters, reviews, opinion writing, nonfiction; use mentor texts to inspire and guide writing; understand writing process—draft, revise, and edit; think about writing for an audience; basic grammar, spelling patterns, and handwriting

Selected Projects and Texts: *Foundations*; Wood Elf series and others (e.g., *Elephant and Piggie*, *Unicorn and Yeti*, *Nature Up Close*, *Narwhal and Jelly*, and *National Geographic for Kids*); *Handwriting Without Tears*; *Writers Workshop*—“small moments,” reviews/opinion pieces, “All About” nonfiction chapter books; journal writing; letters to community members



Mathematics

Number and Operations: Represent/solve problems involving addition/subtraction to 100; understand/apply properties of operations and the relationship between addition/subtraction; fluently add/subtract up to 20; use place value understanding and properties of operations to add/subtract two-digit numbers; explore money in relation to grouping and place value

Geometry and Measurement: Measure lengths indirectly and by iterating units of length; understand and manipulate shapes and their attributes

Data Analysis: Represent and interpret data: surveys, picture graphs



Social Studies

Topics: “What makes us who we are”; social justice around identity, introduction to “isms” (e.g., sizeism, sexism, racism) and exploration of the power we have to make change

Skills: How to have safe conversations about ourselves and others, developing a shared language around similarities and differences; write and create art about one’s identity

Selected Projects: Create written self-portraits and supporting artwork that shows who we are at this moment in our lives



Science, Technology and Engineering

Topics: Ants (community jobs, life cycles); prehistoric life (adaptation and animal classification); light; chemistry; computational thinking

Skills: Work as a community; observe; introduction to research techniques; develop expertise on a topic; deliver an oral report; develop and test a hypothesis; beginning coding

Selected Projects: Functional child-sized ant colony doing different jobs and working as a team; bubble chemistry; human coding; evolution simulations; research report (written and oral) and creative fiction on a specific dinosaur



Spanish

Annual Units: All About Me; Latin Heritage Month; Día de los Muertos; calendar; family; seasons, weather, clothes; animals; anatomy; numbers and colors; emotions; cultural celebrations

Special Projects and Cross-Curricular Units: Frida Kahlo; la comida; la familia; dogs and cats



Music and Performing Arts

Concepts and Rhythm Skills: Beat; pulse; ostinato; drone; melody; notation for beat, pulse, rest

Voice and Instruments: Pentatonic scale; Orff ensemble

Movement and Drama: Creative movement exercises; simple circle and partner dances; improvisation, group lines, simple script, music, movement

Composition and Improvisation: Rhythmic and melodic; choreography with partners/small groups

Performances: Halloween ritual; 1st Grade play; Spring Concert



Visual Arts

Topics and Skills: Color mixing (primary/secondary); warm/cool color study; concepts of “big to small” and how shapes relate to one another; sewing: threading a needle, running stitch, pattern making; recognizing patterns

Sample Projects: Stuffed animals; abstract art; found object creatures; clay dinosaurs



Health and Wellness

Topics and Skills: Movement patterns; motor skills; hand-eye coordination development; team-building activities; juggling; underhand throwing/catching; use of supportive language

2ND GRADE



Reading and Writing

Reading: Build comprehension and stamina using “just right” books; understand story structure and retell stories; use multiple strategies to read a word (phonic, context clues, fluency); read across genres; question, connect, infer, and synthesize; develop identity as a reader

Writing: *Writers Workshop* in multiple genres: small moments, non-fiction (how-to), opinion, poetry, research-based nonfiction; writing process (draft, revise, edit); dialogue, complete sentences, and correct punctuation; transition to standard spelling through regular word study; proofreading

Selected Projects and Texts: *Handwriting Without Tears/Fundations*; *All About* non-fiction bird books; “small moments” personal narratives; *Owl Moon*; *The Leaving Morning*; poetry and “I Am From” poems; persuasive “letters for change”; book series (e.g., *Magic Tree House*, *Secrets of Droon*)



Mathematics

Number and Operations: Represent/solve problems involving addition/subtraction to 1000; add/subtract fluently up to 100; work with equal groups of objects to build foundation for multiplication; understand place value up to 1000; use place value understanding and properties of operations to add/subtract three-digit numbers; solve money and time word problems

Geometry and Measurement: Measure and estimate lengths in standard units; relate addition/subtraction to length; understand/manipulate shapes and their attributes

Data Analysis: Represent/interpret data using line plots and bar graphs



Social Studies

Topics: Neighborhoods: change over time, issues of equity, roles of community members; history of the Portola neighborhood; geography; relationship of neighborhood to city (San Francisco) to state (California, including capital city); upstanders, activists, BLM, societal change

Skills: Read, navigate, create maps; communicate how a community changes over time; read/create timelines; activism

Selected Projects and Texts: Build a model neighborhood; the Portola; *The Bay Area Through Time*, *How to be an Antiracist*; identity unit focusing on embracing similarities/celebrating differences



Science, Technology and Engineering

Topics: Simple machines (forces-push, pull, gravity, friction); local birds; animal adaptation and classification

Skills: Build and experiment; prototype designs; develop expertise on a topic; observe bird life

Selected Projects: Build simple machines using design-thinking process (e.g., egg ambulances, kites, parachutes); design/build forts; in-depth study of a local bird; birdwatching in McLaren, St. Mary’s, and Golden Gate Parks



Spanish

Annual Units: All About Me; Latin Heritage Month; Día de los Muertos; calendar; family; seasons, weather, clothes; plants/animals; school and classroom; anatomy; neighborhood places/professions; numbers, colors; emotions; children’s rights; cultural celebrations

Special Projects and Cross-Curricular Units: Latin Heritage country study; la ropa; seasons; birds of Latin America



Music and Performing Arts

Concepts and Rhythm Skills: Notation for beat, pulse, and rest; ostinato; drone; melody; modes of pentatonic scale

Voice and Instruments: Pentatonic scale; visual notations; Orff ensemble (xylophones, metallophones, glockenspiels)

Movement and Drama: Creative movement exercises; simple circle and partner dances; (improvisation, group lines, simple script, music, movement)

Composition and Improvisation: Rhythmic and melodic; choreography with partners/small groups

Performances: Halloween ritual; 2nd Grade play; Spring Concert



Visual Arts

Topics and Skills: Color mixing (primary and secondary); concepts of “big to small” and how shapes relate to one another; over-under structure of weaving; elements of art (line, shape, color, texture); composition

Sample Projects: Watercolor birds; circular weavings; clay tea cups and saucers



Health and Wellness

Topics and Skills: Competency of movement patterns; combine locomotor skills in general space with rhythm; social behavior that respects self and others; perform designed rhythmic behavior; value the role of rules in activities



Reading and Writing

Reading: Develop a rich reader's life; investigate genres such as mystery, realistic fiction, fantasy; interpret informational texts and participate in group discussions; continue to develop decoding and comprehension skills; transition from learning to read to reading to learn

Writing: *Writers Workshop* for an array of purposes and audiences through personal narrative, memoir, fiction, exercises in descriptive writing, research projects, poetry, persuasive letters; write in paragraphs; vary sentence length; revise/edit for greater clarity; bring personal voice to writing; develop manuscript and cursive handwriting to support well-formed, legible writing; further develop conventional grammar, spelling, and punctuation

Selected Projects and Texts: Ohlone origin stories and myths, ecosystem informational pamphlets, persuasive letter-writing



Mathematics

Number and Operations: Use place value understanding and properties of operations to perform multi-digit arithmetic; fluently add/subtract within 1000; represent/solve problems involving multiplication/division; understand properties of multiplication and the relationship between multiplication/division; multiply/divide to 100; develop understanding of fractions as numbers; gain an understanding of fraction equivalencies and comparing simple fractions

Geometry and Measurement: Solve problems involving measurement and estimation of intervals of elapsed time; understand and manipulate shapes and their attributes; understand concepts of area and perimeter

Data Analysis: Represent/interpret data using bar graphs and line plots, and examine mode and outliers of a data set



Social Studies

Topics: Ohlone focus on Bay Area indigenous culture and historical study of different aspects of native life and the use of natural resources to meet human needs; mapmaking and -reading; contemporary policy, political concerns, and social justice movements; expanding spheres of power from school, city, state, to nation, and learning about leadership including mayor, governor, and vice-president and president.

Skills: Introductory research skills: non-fiction reading, highlighting research material; map reading and geographical feature identification (including U.S. states and capitals); in-depth culture study

Selected Projects: *Black Lives Matter at School*; Linda Yamane; regional and municipal park visits; overnight visit to Nature Bridge



Science, Technology and Engineering

Topics: Bay Area ecosystems: oak woodlands, wetlands, ocean, redwood forests; endangered species and recovery efforts; botany: parts, seeds, and adaptations of trees; photosynthesis; reverse engineering and material analysis of a Miwok village

Skills: Build model wetlands and construct relief maps of the Bay Area; understand how saltwater and freshwater creatures co-exist in the Bay; identify tree species on campus and in the Portola; learn modes of seed dispersal; keep engineering logs, design engineer model village, adapt design using modern materials

Selected Projects and Texts: Bay Area ecosystems open house; create a book about trees (integrated unit with Visual Arts); topographical map of California and regional ecosystems; prototyping of Miwok redwood bark house designs using both natural and modern materials



Spanish

Annual Units: All About Me; Latin Heritage Month; Día de los Muertos; calendar; family; seasons, weather, clothes; plants, fruits, and animals; school and classroom; anatomy; means of transportation; professions; numbers and colors; emotions; cultural celebrations; endangered animals; geography

Special Projects and Cross-Curricular Units: Latin Heritage of students, guest speakers; social studies (Mexico); tree project; environmental protection and endangered animals; social justice (children like me)



Music and Performing Arts

Concepts and Rhythm Skills: Transposition of pentatonic scale; standard notation meters (2/4, 3/4, 4/4)

Voice and Instruments: Introduction to notation; singing in Elementary Chorus; addition of soprano recorder to Orff ensemble; instrument-making unit

Movement and Drama: More complex dances; creative movement exercises featuring Laban effort shapes; drama improv games

Composition and Improvisation: Integrating the arts—creation inspired by Visual Arts; recorder compositions

Performances: Halloween ritual; 3rd Grade play; Spring Concert



Visual Arts

Topics and Skills: Color study; tints/shades; concepts of "big to small" and how shapes relate to one another; over/under structure of weaving; scale: value introduction by working with grayscale; assigning value regardless of color

Sample Projects: Negative/positive trees; botany; clay self-portraits



Health and Wellness

Topics and Skills: Team sports and games; define, practice, model sportsmanship; knowledge of health and physical fitness; refine and implement skills towards a strategy in competitive play; identify physical activity as a way to become healthier

Team Sports: Volleyball; basketball; lacrosse; soccer; tee-ball; kickball



Reading and Writing

Reading: Continued transition from *learning to read to reading to learn*; use of word solving strategies to comprehend; build reading stamina; understand story structure to make inferences about the text and retell stories; interpret authors' word choices and impact on the reader; read fiction, non-fiction, poetry; determine importance and use text features to navigate information; key comprehension strategies-questions, connections, predictions, inferences, and conclusions

Writing: Through the *Writers Workshop* model, build writing stamina by writing frequently for extended periods of time; analyze mentor texts for inspiration and professional models; understand/use the writing process-rehearse, draft, revise, edit, publish; pursue genres that include narrative, information, opinion, and poetry; study grammar, mechanics, spelling, and vocabulary

Selected Projects and Texts: Short-story and poetry publishing; *There's a Boy in the Girls' Bathroom*; *Mia Lee is Wheeling Through Middle School*; *El Deafo*; *My Name is Brian*; *Love That Dog*; *One Crazy Summer*; *Brown Girl Dreaming*; *Zia*; *By the Great Horned Spoon*; *A Long Walk to Water*; *A Wish in the Dark*; *Where the Mountain Meets the Moon*; *Hello Universe*; *Sylvia and Aki*



Mathematics

Number and Operations: Use all four operations to solve problems; fluently add/subtract multi-digit numbers using the standard algorithm; familiarization with factors and multiples; place value understanding for multi-digit whole numbers; understand fraction equivalence and ordering; build fractions from unit fractions; understand decimal notation for fractions; compare decimal fractions

Geometry and Measurement: Solve problems involving measurement and conversion of measurements; understand the concept of angles and how to measure them; draw and identify lines and angles; classify shapes by properties of lines and angles

Data Analysis: Represent/interpret data by translating frequency graphs into value bar graphs, making inferences, and depicting co-variation



Social Studies

Topics: Introduction of the role of historians; artifacts as history; the Gold Rush (hidden figures and stories); turn-of-the-century migration to California; the Chinese immigrant experience; connecting the past to the present; location impact on culture

Skills: Identify primary vs. secondary sources; generate questions, determine closed-/open-ended questions, determine credibility of a source, note-taking from primary and secondary sources; introduction of formal research skills; draw conclusions from sources; develop historical analysis skills; identify writer perspective(s) and seek multiple voices in history; develop map skills

Selected Projects: Historical fiction; non-fiction articles; primary source documents—photos, newspaper articles, eyewitness accounts; historical artifacts; Gold Rush Perspectives Project; selected historical excerpts; *Doing History*; *Sylvia and Aki*; *Inside Out and Back Again*; *One Crazy Summer*; *Esperanza Rising*; *Riding Freedom*; *Biddy Mason Speaks Up*; overnight field trip to Coloma State Park



Science, Technology and Engineering

Topics: Electricity, computer science, human anatomy, physiology

Skills: Understand computers and robots are mindless machines (hardware) until people code them (software); create basic computer algorithms using block programming; build a basic electrical circuit, describe the difference between conductive and non-conductive materials; practice persistence while debugging; identify the structures, functions, processes of body systems, how they work together; learn how life choices, technology, and nutrition can help maintain health

Selected Projects and Texts: The basics of electricity, conductivity, and circuits; coding using code.org's Computer Science Fundamentals curriculum; interactive physical computing with Makey Makey; sheep heart and lung dissection; designing models of body systems that demonstrate how the system functions and interacts with another system



Spanish

Annual Units: All About Me; Latin Heritage Month; Día de los Muertos; calendar; family; seasons, weather, clothes; plants and animals; school and classroom; anatomy; neighborhood places and professions; number/colors; emotions; cultural celebrations; Hispanic countries (e.g., Bolivia, Argentina, Costa Rica)

Special Projects and Cross-Curricular Units: Día de los Muertos; female athlete biography; cardboard Portola models; school label-making; native speaker interview; *Huevos Verdes con Jamón*; poetry; Women's History Month; fables; Brandon Brown



Music and Performing Arts

Concepts and Rhythm Skills: Polyrhythm and mixed-metered music; modal diatonic scales; notation of 6/8 rhythms, syncopation, and sixteenth notes

Voice and Instruments: Diatonic scale and modes; standard notation; Elementary Chorus; body percussion; recorder; Orff ensemble

Movement and Drama: Creative movement featuring Laban effort shapes; drama improv games

Composition and Improvisation: Melodic composition in modal scales; choreography; creation inspired by Visual Arts

Performances: Halloween ritual; 4th Grade play; Spring Concert



Visual Arts

Topics and Skills: Color study; monochromatic and analogous; over-under structure of weaving; roll and cut slab from clay; value introduction by working with grayscale; assigning value regardless of color to show form

Sample Projects: Self-portraits using value; clay loom woven with analogous yarn; perspective chalk drawings



Health and Wellness

Topics and Skills: Introduction to physical fitness challenge; team sports and games; group communication; circuit training, paced running and building upper body strength; set goals and recognize personal growth

Team Sports: Volleyball; basketball; lacrosse; soccer; tee-ball; kickball; football; handball; tennis; futsal

5TH GRADE



Reading and Writing

Reading: Determine main ideas and salient information in fiction and nonfiction texts; summarize text effectively; use excerpts to illustrate points and derive meaning; trace/analyze character and plot development throughout a novel; generate themes from a text; identify/analyze varying authors' styles and their impact on the reader; make connections, inferences, predictions about the text; consult reference materials, (e.g., dictionary, glossary, thesaurus)

Writing: Through *Writers Workshop*, continue to build writing stamina by writing frequently for extended periods of time; analyze mentor texts for inspiration and professional models; understand/use the writing process (rehearse, draft, revise, edit, publish, giving/receiving feedback); further pursue genres that include narrative, information, opinion, poetry; study grammar/mechanics; demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English (e.g., capitalization, punctuation, and spelling); use *Worldly Wise* for spelling and vocabulary development

Selected Projects and Texts: Poetry, persuasive essays, realistic fiction; self-led book clubs; *Wonder*; *P.S. Be Eleven*; *The Giver*; *Chains*; *Refugee*



Mathematics

Number and Operations: Write/interpret numerical expressions; multiply multi-digit whole numbers using the standard algorithm; perform operations with multi-digit whole numbers and decimals to the hundredths place; understand the place value system; add/subtract fractions with like and unlike denominators; use equivalent fractions as a strategy to add/subtract fractions; apply/extend previous understandings of multiplication/division to multiply/divide fractions

Geometry and Measurement: Classify two-dimensional figures into categories based on their properties; calculate volume and surface area of geometric solids

Data Analysis: Graph points on the coordinate plane to solve real-world and mathematical problems



Social Studies

Topics: Identity, power, and privilege; disabilities and ableism; colonial history; the refugee experience

Skills: Develop awareness and understanding of historical and current events through an anti-discriminatory lens; think critically; engage with informational texts; question; read various forms of literature and primary and secondary source materials; locate, select, organize information from written sources; read/interpret maps, globes, graphs, pictures, political cartoons; read for information; categorize, summarize, organize notes; organize/express ideas clearly in writing and in speaking

Selected Projects: Primary source documents; Teachers' Curriculum Institute; *A People's History of the US*; *A Different Mirror*; *Lies My History Teacher Told Me*; short stories; various novels about the refugee experience; UNHCR curriculum; *Teaching Tolerance*



Science, Technology and Engineering

Topics: The Science Trip from the Deep Sea to Outer Space

Skills: Explore the physical science and biological necessities of life in the sea and space, and how it connects to life on the surface of the Earth; understand Newton's Laws of Motion; identify the structures and relationships of our own solar system

Selected Projects and Texts: Work through the prototyping cycle to design, build, and test submarines, and rockets; design/execute experiments with quantifiable data to analyze and form conclusions; create mythical creatures that could live in the depths of the ocean and on other planets.



Spanish

Annual Units: All About Me; Latin Heritage Month; Día de los Muertos; calendar; family; seasons, weather, clothes; plants/animals; anatomy; numbers/colors; emotions; cultural celebrations; Afrocuban music; natives of mesoamerica; collaborations with music, visual art, and humanities units

Special Projects and Cross-Curricular Units: Making prehispanic altars; composing market songs, Sensemayá video project, refugee map labels



Music and Performing Arts

Concepts and Rhythm Skills: Diatonic scales; harmonic shifts; notation of 6/8 rhythms, syncopation, and sixteenth notes

Voice and Instruments: Diatonic scale/modes; standard notation; Orff ensemble and chorus; recorder; ukulele; percussion

Movement and Drama: Creative movement exercises featuring Laban effort shapes; drama improv games; shadow theater

Composition and Improvisation: Rhythmic/melodic improvisation and composition; choreography, musical stop-motion animation

Performances: Halloween ritual; 5th Grade play; Spring Concert



Visual Arts

Topics and Skills: Support development of concrete thinking; small motor skill development; 2- and 3D expressions of the same themes; drawing; painting; printing; ceramics; mixed media; sculpture; design-thinking skills; create works of art that reflect community and cultural traditions

Sample Projects: Opening painting project; cross-curricular units; self-portraits; clay painting palette prototyping; Día De Los Muertos artwork; Etel Adnan-inspired felt landscapes; Beatriz Milhaze-inspired collage art; interdisciplinary refugee art unit



Health and Wellness

Topics and Skills: Leadership exploration; physical fitness challenge; positive social interactions and self-expression; team sports/games strategies; communication and peer coaching

Team Sports: Volleyball; basketball; lacrosse; soccer; tee-ball; ultimate frisbee; European handball; football; tennis; futsal

6TH GRADE



Reading and Writing

Reading: Build a literary community through book clubs: learn group work, responsibility, perspective-taking, responsive communication; build autonomy; connect deeply to literature through developing a literary analysis toolbox; think expansively about all types of readings; set a reading goal for the year; independent reading

Writing: Continue to build stamina by writing frequently for extended periods of time; analyze mentor texts for inspiration and professional models; understand and use the writing process (rehearse, draft, revise, edit, and publish, giving/receiving feedback); further explore genres that include narrative, information, opinion, and poetry; study grammar and mechanics; use standard English conventions (e.g., capitalization, punctuation, and spelling); use *Worldly Wise* for spelling, and vocabulary development

Selected Projects and Texts: Cookbook project; literary analysis; TED Talk essay and presentation; hero short story inspired by lower school buddy; poetry work; *The Circuit*; *Seedfolks*; group social issues book club choices about the Chinese Cultural Revolution; personal social issues book club (choice of coming-of-age novels), graphic novel book club.



Mathematics

Number and Operations: Understand ratio concepts and solve problems involving ratios, rates, percentages; use efficient algorithms to add, subtract, multiply, and divide multi-digit whole numbers and decimals; develop conceptual understanding and procedural fluency with fraction division; understand rational numbers in context

Geometry and Measurement: Solve problems involving area, surface area, and volume

Expressions and Equations: Read, write, and evaluate algebraic expressions



Social Studies

Topics: Food justice; identity and community; geography and culture; civilization building in China and Mesopotamia; Ancient Egypt

Skills: Evaluate sources; corroborate ideas with evidence; develop close reading and evidence-based writing skills; analyze primary sources; read, navigate, and develop maps; use research and source citation fundamentals

Selected Projects and Texts: *Angel Island: Gateway to Gold Mountain* (Chinese poetry translated); book club on group social issues related to China; TED Talks; Proteus research project and presentation based on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and an activist; Design your Own Country map; non-fiction articles, primary source documents, and Teachers' Curriculum Institute *History Alive* (online text)



Science, Technology and Engineering

Topics: Physical science and chemistry basics; earth's history, structure and natural disasters; and 3D design, JavaScript, AI, and robotics

Skills: Asking scientific questions; plan and carry out experiments; engage in an argument from evidence; develop and use models; construct explanations; evaluate and communicate information; analyze and interpret data; use mathematics and computational thinking; design, test, and evaluate engineering solutions

Selected Projects and Texts: Design and conduct density, chemical, and thermodynamic investigations; construct and troubleshoot natural disaster models; build and optimize a scale model of a boat that carries a given amount of weight and can survive rough seas; apply the design process and coding skills to create an autonomous robot that can travel throughout the classroom; design a dream house with computer-aided design (CAD) software and narrate a tour in Spanish



Spanish

Annual Units: Skill development in speaking, listening, reading, writing on daily life topics, as outlined in American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages guidelines California World Language Content Standards; greetings and introductions; describing self and interests; hobbies and free time activities; school vocabulary; professions; numbers 100-2000; wild animals; parts of the house; Hispanic artists; seasons review (winter solstice project); schedule and classes; family and friends; cultural celebrations; country studies

Special Projects and Cross-Curricular Units: Spanish-speaking country geography; Día de los Muertos candle dedication project; field trip to Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts for altar exhibit and tour of Balmy Alley murals; International Women's Day biography; *Manos de Mujeres* song project; Skylark camping vocabulary; Proteus project abstract



Music and Performing Arts

Theme and Units: Music as culture with games, instruments, and dance of the Silk Road, West Africa, Europe, and South America

Instruments: Recorder ensemble; Orff ensemble; drums; non-Western

Dance and Drama: Traditional cultural dances; choreography exercises; children's folktale theater

Composition and Improvisation: Arrangement of melodies, chants, and poems; composition inspired by Visual Arts

Performances: Assemblies; Spring Concert



Visual Arts

Topics and Skills: Multi-tiered, student-centered art units; drawing; painting; printing; ceramics; mixed media; design-thinking skills; works of art that reflect community and cultural traditions while allowing students to explore the practice of a creative process

Sample Projects: Opening painting project; Día De Los Muertos collaboration; clay vessel design, abstract variation on the theme; timed figure drawing, interdisciplinary and cross-curricular units; contemporary artist studies



Health and Wellness

Topics and Skills: Establishing commonalities as a community through collaboration and sportsmanship; introduction of sport fundamentals and rules with assessment through tests; practice tasks and small-sided games; hand/eye coordination including throwing, catching, and striking; spatial awareness; fitness (understanding various muscle groups), quarterly test run; positive contributions towards self and others

7TH GRADE



Reading and Writing

Reading: Analyze novels, short stories, and poetry; utilize literary and poetic devices; explore genres and apply a social-cultural critical lens to independent reading choices; make connections between history and literature

Writing: Build writing stamina; utilize elements of literature and figurative language; develop paragraph building and expository/analytical essay writing; gain independence in use of the writing process (rehearse, draft, revise, edit, publish, thesis development, giving/receiving feedback); complete personal narrative and memoirs; literary and poetry analysis essays; *Worldly Wise* for spelling and vocabulary

Selected Projects and Texts: Multicultural novels (e.g., *Shooting Kabul*), short stories, and poetry; exploring theme of memory in *Between Shades of Gray*; literary response essay for *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*; writing science fiction stories



Mathematics

Proportions, Number System, Expressions, and Equations: Analyze ratios, proportional relationships, and percentages; add/subtract, multiply/divide rational numbers, evaluate expressions with integer exponents; define, evaluate, and compare functions; analyze and solve problems using numerical and algebraic expressions and linear equations

Geometry: Draw, construct, and describe geometric figures and the relationships between them; explore properties of congruence and similarity; solve problems involving angle measure, area, surface area, and volume

Data Analysis, Statistics, and Probability: Describe and analyze data sets; draw inferences about one or more populations using random samples; develop, use, and evaluate probability models



Social Studies

Topics: Legacy of the Roman Empire to Enlightenment thinkers with unit studies on daily life and religious tolerance in Islamic Spain; world religions; medieval Europe, feudalism, feudal Japan, African empires, and Islam; Afghanistan: geography, history, and peoples

Skills: Source evaluation; corroboration; historical thinking; identifying patterns; analyzing primary sources; map reading and historical analysis skills; conducting research, gathering data, analyzing data; evidence-based writing; MLA citations; expository writing responding to history essential questions

Selected Projects and Texts: Medieval creatures and structures research, design, and film; feudalism simulation; map skills; understanding inequality via geography; non-fiction articles and primary source documents; medieval history to modern times; research and evidence-based writing and presentations; historical texts via Stanford History Education Program and History Alive



Science, Technology and Engineering

Topics: Life Science: Introduction to scientific method and cells; energy flow and ecosystem dynamics; biomedical ethics and engineering

Skills: Design/conduct experiments using the scientific method; data collection and analysis to understand the effects of abiotic/biotic factors on ecosystem health; understand cell theory and organelles. Analyze energy flow in ecosystems, food chains and webs; demonstrate how matter cycles through ecosystems. Understand the case of Henrietta Lacks; use the engineering design process; develop robotics skills

Selected Projects and Texts: Conduct an experiment to investigate the impact of abiotic factors on plant growth; create a 3D cell model and explain the functions of different organelles. Construct a food web that includes various trophic levels and calculate available energy; design a mini-biome ecosystem and monitor its dynamics over time. Research and present the ethical considerations surrounding Henrietta Lacks' case; design and test prototypes for a medical application using robotics



Spanish

Annual Units: Build oral and literacy skills on daily life topics with increasing complexity; greetings and introductions; self and interests; personalities, hobbies, and free time activities; school, schedule, and classes; daily routine; Hispanic inventors; food, helping others, family and friends; cultural celebrations; country studies

Special Projects and Cross-Curricular Units: Food and health; travel and vacation; around the community; multi-class interactive video presentations on Flip (e.g., mi rutina diaria, mis comidas, etc.); Latin Heritage Month biography project, Día de los Muertos unit with Total Physical Response Storytelling novel; MasterChef del Mundo Hispanohablante cooking project; collaboration with Humanities y Poesía; origami; Colombia Flip collaboration; non-profit organizations



Music and Performing Arts

Theme and Units: Music as history; Carl Orff and medieval music; Spain of the three cultures; Baroque, Romantic, Nationalist, and Impressionist music; composer biographies; pop music a *capella* project; contemporary music techniques; major, minor and modal scales; ground bass patterns; melodic sequences; functional harmony; medieval instruments and iconography; Renaissance dance

Instruments and Dance: SATB recorders; Orff ensemble (mallet percussion); Renaissance stringed instruments; historic dances from medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, and Classical periods

Composition and Improvisation: "Scary" music composition; one-minute silent film soundtracks; a *capella* project; stop-motion animation to music; choreography to classical music

Performances: Assemblies; Spring Concert



Visual Arts

Topics and Skills: Abstract thinking skills; apply sustained effort to longer-term projects; drawing; painting; printing; mixed media; visual storytelling; design-thinking skills; work that reflect community and cultural traditions

Sample Projects: Día De Los Muertos collaboration; interdisciplinary and cross-curricular units; self-portrait study; abstract variation on the theme; two-point perspective drawing; line-study timed figure drawing; abstract color mixing painting; contemporary artist studies



Health and Wellness

Topics and Skills: Practice sport unit rules, fundamentals, and written tests; understanding strategy of sport; small sided competition with defense; fitness: reaction, speed, and agility exercises, quarterly test run; teamwork: how one's output affects others

8TH GRADE



Reading and Writing

Reading: Literary and poetic devices; develop multicultural perspectives through fiction; connect historical events with literature; gender identity and social norms in literature; drama as a conduit of the human experience; *Wordly Wise* for vocabulary development; grammar in context

Writing: Utilize elements of literature and figurative language; develop paragraph building and expository/analytical essay writing; use literary devices; continue use of writing process, including outline work and thesis development and peer review; follow a writing rubric to assess one's work and writing goals; complete personal narrative essays; analyze and write poetry; research writing and project

Selected Projects and Texts: *Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*; *The Pearl*; *The Outsiders*; *A Young People's History of the United States*; drama production; *To Kill a Mockingbird*; *Just Mercy*; poetry and short fiction readers



Mathematics

Number System, Expressions, and Equations: Approximate irrational numbers; work with radicals and integer exponents; understand the connection between proportional relationships, lines, and linear equations; analyze, graph, and solve linear equations and pairs of simultaneous linear equations

Functions: Define, evaluate, and compare functions; use multiple representations of functions to model relationships between quantities

Geometry: Explore congruence and similarity; Pythagorean theorem; solve problems involving volume of cylinders, cones, and spheres

Statistics and Probability: Investigate patterns of association in data with two variables

8th Grade Algebra Seminar: Polynomials, quadratic equations, functions, and radicals



Social Studies

Topics: U.S. history: indigenous peoples to the Industrial Revolution; focus on various civil rights movements

Skills: Source evaluation; collaboration; MLA citation format; critically analyze history; close reading skills; evidence-based writing; analyze primary sources; map reading and historical analysis skills; identify perspective of writer and missing voices; consider questions of identity, race, gender, sexuality, and other experiences when evaluating social power

Selected Projects and Texts: Howard Zinn's *A Young People's History*; Joy Hakim's *A History of US*; analysis of primary source documents; research project on Western Expansion; economic simulation project (Cost of Living); building own nation and constitution group project; graphic memoir project



Science, Technology and Engineering

Topics: Physical science: introduction to matter and chemical reactions; motion and forces; robotics and engineering applications

Skills: Explore properties and behavior of matter; write chemical formulas and balance equations; calculate density; apply the scientific method. Understand Newton's Laws of Motion; analyze the role of race, education, and socioeconomic status in historical experiments; apply scientific principles to solve problems. Further robotics skill using a drop-and-drag application; use the engineering design process

Selected Projects: Perform a compounds lab to demonstrate an understanding of organic compounds; create 3D models of atoms and molecules to illustrate their structures. Build and test solar power cars to demonstrate Newton's Laws in action; study the Tuskegee Experiment, analyze its ethical implications, and discuss its impact on scientific research. Engage in a robotics challenge to solve a specific problem; participate in a physics of roller coasters engineering design project; visit Tuskegee University and the Legacy Museum to connect historical events with science and engineering



Spanish

Topic and Skills: Build oral and literacy skills on daily life topics at increasing complexity; greetings and introductions; self and interests; traits and personalities; nature and environment; hobbies and free time activities; school, schedule, and classes; daily routine; family and friends; cultural celebrations; country studies

Selected Themes and Projects: Presentations; Día de los Muertos collaborative project with Humanities: dedication to a Change Maker; bebidas prehispánicas, Total Physical Response Storytelling: *La Llorona*, *La Jardinera*, *La Guerra Sucia*, *Vida y Muerte en la Mara Salvatrucha*, *La Hija de Sastre*, *La Calaca Alegre*



Music and Performing Arts

Theme and Units: Jazz: West African roots, improvisation, and social justice; ragtime, blues, swing and other related genres

Concepts: Jazz forms/rhythms/phrasing; melody (blues scales) and harmony; jazz history from 1900-50; jazz musicians and composers; jazz's role in culture and shifting challenges in changing racial climate; history of musical theater

Instruments and Dance: Orff ensemble; marimba and vibraphone; drum set; bass, piano, band instruments; swing dance; Lindy Hop; silent movie skits; creative movement exercises

Composition and Improvisation: Improvisation over jazz harmonic changes, composition for drama; choreography in small groups

Performances: Assemblies; Spring Concert; Mummies' play (St. George and the Dragon); 8th Grade play



Visual Arts

Topics and Skills: Growth and identity formation in units that combine writing reflection and visual expression; discussions and observations on contemporary artists; drawing; painting; printmaking; ceramics; mixed media; design thinking skills; work that reflects community and cultural traditions, and student development of personal voice

Sample Projects: Día De Los Muertos collaboration; interdisciplinary units; contemporary artist studies; self-portrait



Health and Wellness

Topics and Skills: Demonstration and knowledge of sport unit fundamentals (and testing of rules); small and full sided competition; fitness: high intensity interval training, body weight lift, quarterly test run; teamwork, self-reflection on individual team roles, understanding leadership within the self, and understanding our intentions to compete



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