

DESCRIPTIONS OF CURRICULA FOR ALL GRADE LEVELS

THREE-YEAR KINDERGARTEN

The three-year kindergarten provides educational experiences developing social, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth. We respect the developmental differences in each child.

Each child is expected to take care of his/her rest room needs. His/her clothing should be designed so that it can be easily managed by the child. Keep a change of clothing in your child's backpack in case of accidents.

Children learn through many and varied activities. Play becomes a learning experience, developing the child's social and motor skills. Imagination is encouraged through imitation and pretend play. Art materials stimulate imagination and creativity.

Children learn to speak in complete sentences, to follow directions, and to understand the meaning of new words and concepts. They identify sounds, objects, pictures, and geometric shapes.

In our kindergarten, each child is extremely important. While working to develop self-control, we encourage each child's individuality. We want our kindergarten to be a special and happy place where each child feels loved and needed.

FOUR-YEAR KINDERGARTEN

In the four-year kindergarten the materials, equipment and curriculum are designed to reflect the developmental level of the child and to foster growth and learning. Children will have opportunity to experiment with art materials, participate in cooking, travel on field trips, and exercise through both outdoor and indoor play. Music, books, stories, puzzles, readiness activities and dramatic play will be available daily. Pre-reading and pre-writing activities are an integral part of the program.

The four-year-old will be encouraged to become as independent as possible in self-care such as taking care of bathroom needs, washing hands, hanging up wraps, and putting on socks, shoes, coats, and sweaters.

Much of our learning is in the area of social adjustments such as learning to share, playing with others, cooperating, respecting authority, developing awareness of others' rights and needs, and taking care of property.

We plan a classroom climate that reflects God's love for us. Through role modeling, we help the children develop Christian attitudes of truth, peace, integrity, and love toward one another. We want each child to feel secure enough to venture into new friendships and assured enough to take new steps toward autonomy.

FIVE-YEAR KINDERGARTEN

The five-year kindergarten is a comprehensive program designed to be developmentally appropriate for your child so that he/she may experience a wide range of readiness skills. It provides activities which enhance the emotional, social, physical, intellectual, and spiritual growth of each special member of our class. Our curriculum stresses real-life experiences and discovery rather than drill-type activities.

Our program concentrates on an experiential (hands-on) approach. Current research indicates that this is the most effective method for teaching young children. We provide activities that include experiences in language (written and spoken), number concepts, science, and social awareness as well as music, art, body awareness and coordination. Other activities include unstructured play in our classroom and play yard through use of dress-up, games, building blocks, puppetry, and simply our own imaginations. Cooking, field trips, show and tell, and the home reading program are also an important part of the curriculum.

The kindergarten program carefully attends to the spiritual and emotional development of each child. Bible stories, memory verses, and scripture songs are among our daily activities. A consistent, firm and loving classroom environment, as well as affirmation of self-esteem and acceptance are provided for each child's emotional development.

Our curriculum is enhanced with enrichment activities of art, music, computer, foreign language (French and Russian), physical education and library time.

GRADE ONE

We start out in **writing** by learning how to form D'Nealian letters and numbers neatly and correctly. **Reading** begins by reviewing the consonant sounds, becoming acquainted with the vowel sounds, and learning some basic sight words. Sounds are then put together into blends, digraphs, and vowel combinations to form whole words. Much attention is given to comprehension, sequencing, and study skills.

Language arts skills include the following: alphabetizing; identifying action, naming, and describing words; recognizing asking and telling sentences; and capitalization. Spelling words consist of sight words and words that reinforce the phonetic skills being taught.

Our **Bible** curriculum tells the story of God and His people, with the story told chronologically. As the stories unfold, we see that we, too, are part of God's story. We learn a memory verse every week.

Our **social studies and science** units are very flexible, focusing on the Virginia Standards of Learning. We cover subjects such as "me," families, seasonal events, health, animals,

plants, and insects. Completing projects and displays and taking field trips which are closely related to these academic units are part of the first grade experience. A *Weekly Reader* is also used to teach current events.

The **math** program is success-oriented. Daily practice is provided in skills related to the calendar, counting, patterning, weather, reading graphs, telling time, and counting money. Lessons include written practice and number fact practice as well as hands-on activities and cooperative group activities. Problem solving and a foundation of numeration and number concepts to 100 is included on a regular basis. Children are expected to master basic addition and subtraction facts.

GRADE TWO

The mark of second grade is diversification. In **math** we begin to branch out from basic one-digit addition and subtraction to two-digit operations with regrouping. We discuss the concepts of greater than/less than, money values, and telling time. Fractions and multiplication are introduced. Fact sheets and manipulatives reinforce concepts.

In **English** we learn basic sentence parts, enlarging them, and making them more interesting. The big task is learning the differences between a noun, verb, and describing word. Creative writing is interwoven with grammar and punctuation, and we practice writing letters and addressing envelopes.

Spelling introduces basic phonics and spelling rules including the exceptions to the rules, e.g. changing the *y* to *i* and adding *es*; doubling the final consonant before adding *ing*.

The big thrill of the year comes in January when we learn **cursive writing**. The students are willing to work hard on this because they have been looking forward to it for so long.

Science brings us to studies of ourselves and things around us. We explore the wonders of God's creation: animals, insects, plants, air, and our bodies. We learn proper care of our bodies.

Reading skills cover things such as main ideas, alphabetizing, using a glossary and dictionary, sequencing, critical thinking skills, and doing a lot of good old pleasure reading.

Social studies units include Native Americans, Ancient Egypt, and China, along with mapskills. We also read and study a weekly child's newspaper, *Weekly Reader*, to learn about other people and places around us.

Bible lessons teach us about God and His people. Weekly scripture memorization is part of the curriculum, including Psalm 23 and parts of Luke 2.

GRADE THREE

A primary goal for students is developing a positive attitude toward learning: to be excited about new and unknown things; to be curious; to feel okay about saying "I don't

know;" to feel that they *can* learn and that they *want* to learn. It is the curiosity and enthusiasm for discovery with which children are born.

Third grade is a dramatic switch from second grade. Children need to do much more writing and copying. Many assignments will be explained at the beginning of the day and then completed independently.

Several of the things we work on in **math** are mastery of four-digit place value, regrouping in addition and subtraction, and multiplication facts. Division is introduced, and fractions are expanded upon, using the understanding developed in grades one and two.

Some of the skills developed in **English** are writing sentences correctly, verb usage, nouns with plurals and possessives, sentence punctuation, and creative writing. **Reading** skills cover such things as **spelling** patterns, phonics, word analysis, vocabulary, and fluency. Comprehension includes strategies, skills, and critical thinking.

Science relates to the Virginia Standards of Learning. Topics include the forest, ocean, desert, living things, classification of animals and simple machines.

Bible studies focus on Old and New Testament stories. along with weekly memorization of assigned Bible passages.

Social studies focus on map skills, early explorers, famous Americans, economics, and ancient Greece, Rome, and Mali.

Each child's natural creativity will be encouraged throughout the year with **art** projects and **creative writing** experiences.

GRADE FOUR

The *Saxon math* program provides daily practice in basic computation and math facts and gives daily practice in previously learned concepts through mental math and word problems. We calculate the perimeter and area of polygons. We multiply and divide three-digit by two-digit numbers. We measure elapsed time. We name numbers through hundred millions. Our study of fractions includes naming, comparing, adding subtracting, changing to equivalent fractions, and working with mixed numbers and improper fractions.

In **English** we build upon earlier skills in sentence structure, use of adverbs and adjectives, writing friendly letters and addressing envelopes properly. We study the elements of story writing and compose creative writings.

In **reading**, we study various **spelling** patterns, main ideas, predicting outcomes, drawing conclusions, making inferences, and extending study skills. We learn to express our comprehension in writing. We work on creative and critical thinking skills.

Bible lessons introduce the stories of God's nation. Weekly memorization of assigned Bible passages that relate to the Bible lessons is required.

A Beka and *McGraw Hill* materials are used in **science**. We spend most of our time studying flowers, insects, birds, and earth sciences. As time allows, we study electricity, magnetism, food chains, and health.

Our **social studies** program concentrates on the history, development, and geography of our state of Virginia. We study the enormous contribution Virginia made to the early development of our nation as well as resources that make Virginia of continuing importance in the present day. As time allows, map skills are reviewed.

GRADE FIVE

Fifth grade **math** involves more complicated division, fractions, and mental math. We continue honing speed and accuracy in math facts. Graphing is also explored.

Investigating God's World presents a positive Christian view of **science** and the origin of all things. We study animals found on land and in the sea, treasures of the earth, and wonders of the sky. *McGraw Hill* texts further introduce skills recommended by the Standards of Learning. *Enjoying Good Health* encourages us to maintain healthy bodies and develop positive self attitudes.

In **social studies** *Our United States* presents a review of America's early explorers and history. We study the states and their geographical locations. We memorize the states and their capitals. We are introduced to various types of map skills.

In **English**, we continue building upon writing and grammar skills learned in prior grades. Journaling and writing imaginative stories hone our writing skills. Book reports in a variety of forms are required throughout the year.

Reading is taught on different levels and includes comprehension, critical reading, and study skills. **Spelling** includes a variety of activities related to weekly vocabulary lists. Dictionary skills, proofreading, and creative writing are reinforced.

Our **Bible** curriculum presents the Old and New Testament as the story of God's acts and words. Weekly memorization of assigned Bible passages is required.

Projects and field trips are excellent avenues of learning. We use these throughout the year to strengthen concepts in the different subject areas. One semester of DARE is included in the curriculum.

GRADE SIX

The **Bible** curriculum involves reading and discussing the *Book of Acts*, memorizing related scriptures, open Bible quizzes, and an assigned project every nine weeks. Using examples from Acts, the goal of the curriculum will be character building and applying the Word of God to everyday life situations (i.e. finding peaceful resolutions to student issues through peer mentoring.)

The **math** curriculum uses Saxon's *Math 76*. Lessons begin with fact practices, mental math and problem solving. Building on the foundation set in previous lessons, new components including fractions, order of operations, and decimals are introduced. Based on pre-testing some students may be placed in seventh grade math. Assessment will be based on homework, quizzes and tests.

Prentice-Hall's *Literature* is the text for **integrated language arts (ILA)**. Reading, spelling, vocabulary, word origins, grammar and writing skills are incorporated into the program. Students will also be expected to do independent reading. Assessment will be based on oral and written exercises, homework, quizzes, tests, and projects.

The text for Sixth grade **social studies** is *Our United States*. We begin with the Reconstruction period in 1877 and continue to the present. We build on the fundamental concepts in civics, economics, and geography which were introduced in fifth grade. Assessment is based on homework, projects and tests.

Using the basic skills of scientific investigation, reasoning, and logic introduced in our A Beka **science** program, *Observing God's World*, we study force, motion and energy, and atoms. In *Science Explorer: Earth Science*, we study the water cycle, the properties of water and atmosphere, and understanding solutions. We research environmental issues, investigate certain life processes essential to the survival and perpetuation of the species, and conduct experiments.

Health is incorporated into the **physical education** program.

GRADE SEVEN

Seventh Grade **Bible** involves reading and discussing the *Gospel of Matthew*, memorizing related scriptures, open Bible quizzes, and an assigned project every nine weeks. Using examples from *Matthew*, the goal is character building and applying the Word of God to everyday life (e.g. finding peaceful resolutions to student issues through peer mentoring.)

Prentice-Hall's *Literature* is the text for **integrated language arts (ILA)**. Reading, spelling, vocabulary, word origins, grammar and writing skills are incorporated into the program. Students will also be expected to do independent reading. Assessment will be based on oral and written exercises, homework, quizzes, tests, and projects.

Based on pre-testing, students will study either seventh grade **math** or **pre-algebra**. The former will use Saxon's *Math 87: Incremental Development*, practicing foundational skills of mathematics. New components such as fractions, exponents, or graphs will come with each lesson, and reinforced through practice. Progress will be tested after every fifth lesson. *Algebra 1/2: An Incremental Development* prepares students for Algebra I. When students comprehend equations, scientific notation, or metric conversions they can apply them as needed. Homework, quizzes, and tests will assess student progress.

Social studies are divided into two sections. In **Civics**, students focus on the three branches of the U.S. government using Steck-Vaughn's *American Government*. The other portion will be the study of Steck-Vaughn's *Economics*. Assessment will be based on homework, quizzes, tests, and projects.

Using A Beka's *Science, Order, and Reality*, seventh graders investigate cells, life processes, ecosystems, biological communities, genetics, and reproduction. There will be experiments, required research, field trips, and projects. The last nine weeks will focus on **health**.

Students study the first half of **Spanish I** for high school credit using McDougal Littell's *En Espanol A*. Assessment will be based on daily oral and written work, homework, quizzes, tests,

projects, a mid-term exam, and a final exam.

GRADE EIGHT

Eighth Grade **Bible** is based on the NIV Bible and the textbook, *The Story of God and His People: The House of Israel*. Using Old and New Testament, each student gains understanding of how individual Bible events fit together to create a whole story and how to apply the Bible to their lives. Bible study includes weekly scripture memorization.

Prentice-Hall's *Literature* is the text for **integrated language arts (ILA)**. Reading, spelling, vocabulary, word origins, grammar and writing skills are incorporated into the program. Assessment will be based on oral and written exercises, homework, quizzes, tests, and projects.

Students will be placed in either **pre-algebra** or **algebra**, based on testing and previous performance. The textbook is Algebra 1/2. Assessment is determined by tests, quizzes and homework. In keeping with Virginia SOLs, students use algebra as a tool representing and solving a variety of practical problems.

Silver Burdett Ginn's *World Geography* is the text for **social studies**. Students will study landforms and individual nations around the globe. Maps, charts, information about ancient civilizations and the text will be used to develop chronology, technology and, research skills. Assessment will be derived from homework, classwork, quizzes, tests, and projects.

Physical science emphasizes in-depth investigation of the nature and structure of matter and the characteristics of energy. Major areas include temperature, sound, light, electricity and magnetism, creation vs. evolution from the A Beka textbook, *Matter and Motion in God's Universe*. Prentice-Hall's *Explore Physical Science*, is the text for physical and chemical changes and nuclear reactions.

Eighth graders study the second half of **Spanish I** begun in seventh grade using McDougal Littell's *En Espanol B*. Successful completion of the course will merit high school credit. Assessment is based on homework, classwork, quizzes, tests, projects, a mid-term exam, and a final exam.