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**FOURTH GRADE
SYLLABI
SAMPLE**

LANGUAGE ARTS - Jon Engle

Texts

Silver Secrets, Silver Burdett & Ginn
Junior Great Books, Grade 4 series
What Joy Awaits You, Open Court Basic Reader
Outside reading books

Fourth grade Language Arts class meets for one and one quarter hours, about four days a week. Areas that we cover include reading, writing, grammar, spelling, vocabulary, dictionary skills, discussions skills, and public speaking skills.

Silver Secrets, *What Joy Awaits You*, and *Junior Great Books*, the main texts that we read from, will be used as springboards for reading, discussions, and some of our written compositions. Along with assigned readings, students are expected to have “free reading” books at all times. These are books of the students’ own choosing to be read at home and during our daily “silent reading” time. For free reading, students are encouraged to select books in a variety of genres (fiction, non-fiction, poetry, drama, etc.), available in the classroom, school library, public library, etc. Students keep journals, which often include information about their free reading books. Along with narrative journals of day-to-day activities and free reading information, we also keep “fiction” journals, where students are encouraged to write creative stories, poetry, etc. of their own choosing. A third journal is the “idea journal.” This is used for keeping a record of great ideas, interesting words and reminders of different writing styles. These are used for later writings.

Class work is focused mainly on reading and writing workshops, class discussions and oral presentations. During writing workshops I will present the lesson and it will be followed by a work time for the students to work independently (or in small groups) on a variety of tasks. For written work students will take an idea from a rough draft through the editing process to completion. Along the way technical skills such as grammar, spelling, and penmanship will be introduced, reviewed, and reinforced. Students will be guided toward working more independently at their own pace, often taking responsibility for choosing their own topic. Our readings emphasize comprehension through discussion of stories in the text and analysis of vocabulary found in selections and individual reading.

Outside of our texts we read a variety of short books. Our first block of these readings deals with the theme of people (often children) who struggle against a hardship and yet are able to maintain hope and inner strength. These books may include *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes*, *Stone Fox*, *Helen Keller*, and/or *Louis Braille*, *The Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson*, and *Number the Stars*. The next block of these books usually deal with similar themes and/or classics (or retellings of classics) in children's and adults’ literature. From this section students are given a greater choice of their readings, but some examples of titles might include *Beowulf*, *King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table*, *Hope Was Here* and *The Secret Garden*.

Among our creative writing exercises we do a work block in “Writing and Music.” This includes an introduction to a variety of classical music composers and sometimes writing short pieces in conjunction with their music.

Time permitting, toward the end of the year we investigate and have some fun with excerpts of William Shakespeare's writings.

Other areas that are covered include regular spelling lessons, combined with individualized spelling study, regular grammar exercises, public speaking, illustration, role playing, and drama.

This class will require study at home of about 20-30 minutes per night, with students expected to read at least 15 to 20 minutes of that time.

Parents are encouraged to make it possible for their children to visit the local public libraries when necessary to select reading materials that will both challenge and interest the students. (I would be glad to give suggestions for reading ideas if you're interested.) Each student is expected to have a grade appropriate dictionary at home and a spelling dictionary for school use.

Evaluations will be based mainly upon the students' development of reading and writing skills, the quality of written works, and the comprehension of ideas which are presented in their reading. Also to be considered is their ability to express these ideas, both orally and in writing. Finally considered is the student's attitude toward his or her work.

Fourth Grade Reading List:
The following books and stories are frequently read in the fourth grade. There is some variation year to year, depending upon several factors including class interest, spontaneous activities, the time that we have, etc.

What Joy Awaits You

Several Tolstoy stories, including:

- The King and the Shirt
- A Just Judge
- Peter the First and the Peasant
- Three Rolls and a Pretzel
- The Merchant and the Purse

Stories about Greek Gods and Greek Legends, including:

- The Greek Gods
- Arachne
- The Apple of Discord and the Mischief It Caused
- How Theseus Lifted the Stone
- Hercules and the Lazy Man
- The Greek Gods
- The Sword of Damocles
- The Norse Gods
- How Thor Got His Hammer

Various Poems:

- The Fog (Carl Sandburg)
- A World in a Grain of Sand (Blake)
- Various limericks and haikus
- Many of Emily Dickinson's poems
- Several others, depending on whomever else happens to cross our path.

Silver Secrets

- Nellie Bly
- Pele (We do a lot with Nellie and Pele)
- Dreams (a poem by Langston Hughes)
- The Two Bears, a selection from *Little House on the Prairie*
- selection from *Pipi Longstockings*
- selection from *Charlotte's Web*
- selection from *The Lion the Witch and Wardrobe*
- Limericks
- Calvin and Hobbes
- selection from *Mary Poppins*
- I'm in Charge of Celebrations (Byrd Baylor)
- The Mouse at the Seashore (Arnold Lobel)

Jr. Great Books

- The Red Balloon
- The Devoted Friend by Oscar Wilde
- selections from *Dr. Dolittle*
- Thank You M'am

"Chapter Books"

- Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes*

Stone Fox
Helen Keller
Louis Braille

At the end of the year, we get into choices*, including:

Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson
Number the Stars
Beowulf (A retelling by Robert Nye)
King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table
Janitor's Boy
Ivanhoe (a retelling)

*This list varies a lot, especially as we go further into the year. It's designed around students' individual interests reading levels and emotional maturity. (More advanced books include: The Mildred Taylor Series (*Roll of Thunder*, etc., *Plain Girl* and others.) One major goal of this series of readings is to allow students to take off with a love of reading and literature. Another goal is for students to think carefully about certain moral and/or character-building issues. From the feedback that I get from both students and parents, these goals are usually met.

Oral readings:

These vary from year to year and include:

King of the Wind
Wayside School Stories
Joan Aiken books (*Wolves of Willoby Chase*, *Whispering Mountain*, maybe even another)
Lloyd Alexander books
several shorter stories
(a lot of vocabulary, games, geography, history, culture, etc. often goes along with our oral readings, not enough time to do as much as I'd like.)

MATH - Jon Engle

Course Description

The first part of this course will include a review and extension of material covered in third grade. As the year progresses the following topics are studied: place value, multiplication (single digit and double digit), division (divisors are single digit; numbers being divided are single digit and multi-digit), graphing, geometry, measurements (metric and standard), fractions and decimals, averages, percentages, money and problem solving. This is an enriched course with many challenges for varying ability levels.

Methods

Much of class time will be spent with hands-on materials and direct student involvement. Students work in small cooperative learning groups and independently on various tasks. We will use *Investigations* for our text. Guided discovery will be used to introduce many new concepts and a problem-solving approach will frequently be used. While much of the homework is textbook based, class work tends to be more games and activities.

Student Work Requirements

Students are expected to participate in class discussions. Homework will be assigned regularly. Basic math fact tests will occur during the year as well as some math skill tests. Students will develop a portfolio of work samples.

Evaluation of Student Progress

Although students are not given grades at this level, they do receive quarterly anecdotal reports regarding their progress. Both areas of strength and weakness will be highlighted when appropriate. The portfolio is often used as part of the evaluation process.

SCIENCE - Jon Engle

The fourth grade science class will study topics such as: structures, energy forces and simple machines, electricity and magnetism, light and sound. Most areas of study will lead the class into other related areas. The study of structures may lead into an investigation of local trees and soil (which could be the source of our building materials) as well as the supporting structure of the body: the skeleton. With light, we may study colors, darkness, the eye and other energy forces in the electromagnetic spectrum. Sound may lead into a study of the ear as well as sonar, etc. We will also spend some time studying a unit entitled *The Voyage of the Mimi*, which is an exciting, cross-curricular study, including investigations into either archaeology and the Mayans, or whales and oceanography (depending on which Mimi unit we study) and a wide variety of other topics. As in other subjects, I like to allow some time in the curriculum to investigate issues that arise spontaneously. This adds a lot to student interest in the class (and it keeps me on my toes!).

As much as possible, this will be a hands-on, experimental and discovery sort of class. Near the end of the school year students write a report about a science topic of their choice, time permitting. They will also give an oral report to the class, sharing what they have learned. They will be guided in the note taking and report writing process. Learning techniques will range from individual demonstrations to activities and projects. Some of the study projects will give students the opportunity to work on critical skills such as problem solving, organization, documentation, communication, management, creative thinking, and decision making.

The quarterly narrative reports will evaluate student achievement, interest and participation in science class, including completion of work.

SOCIAL STUDIES - Beth Robinson

Fourth graders will focus on New Hampshire, its history, culture and geography, through fieldtrips, reading from a textbook called *New Hampshire, Our Home (2010)* by Julie Baker, works of fiction and other class activities. The class will take fieldtrips to Lost River, the Museum of NH history, Strawberry Banke, the NH State House, the Lane Tavern, the Belknap Mill and Shaker Village. The students will complete journal entries and other projects in connection with the trips to reinforce what they learn. In the spring students will complete an oral history of a NH resident during his or her growing up period. The students will do some research of their town histories and make maps of places in their neighborhoods. Getting to know NH and the region through maps will also be a focus.

THIRD AND FOURTH GRADE WORKTIME: Jon Engle, Beth Robinson, Lorraine Jones, Hillary Pincoske, Peter Dimineco

Centers Include: Science, Math, Woodworking, Sewing, Games, Art, Music, Drama, Writing, Computers, Service, Cooking, Reading

Worktime is an academic period twice a week that gives children time to develop and follow through with their own interests and learning. Students make choices and learn from their decisions, practice social skills, and develop academic skills. The different work areas are designed to teach skills in a natural and meaningful way that encourages individual creativity, mastery, and joy of learning.

4th ART – Tina Busch

We will concentrate more on the two dimensional arts. I have learned how much the children love to paint, and so through that medium also combined with other media we will explore the elements and principles of design. After making our traditional art supply kits, we will create our own colored paper with watercolors for future projects. We'll learn about color and texture, line and shapes, space and spacing in composition. Balance, symmetry, emphasis, contrast, light and dark, repetition, pattern, and harmony are concepts we'll try to cover this semester.

4th MUSIC - Lorraine Jones and Dana Mark

We will be studying, playing, listening to, and understanding music in its many different forms. The class will be working with the recorder, learning to read written music in the form of basic notation, and playing and singing together as a group. Our singing and instrumental work will include rounds from different countries and folk songs to celebrate the seasons. We will also be working with the social studies curriculum, exploring New Hampshire history through local musicians and other pieces of colonial music written for voice and recorder.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION - Maya Hardcastle

The goal of the Physical Education Program at Sant Bani School is to explore as many different sorts of games and physical activities as possible, starting with non-competitive activities in the early grades and working up to more organized and competitive games in the upper grades.

To create an environment where, through cooperation and effort, children will be at ease while learning new physical skills and trying their best to improve those skills and want to be active.

HEALTH EDUCATION - Deb Stanton

The goals of the Health Education program are twofold: to encourage students to make choices that promote physical wellness, personal safety and positive self-esteem and to foster the development of a caring community.

More specifically, students will further expand their repertoire of conflict resolution skills. Peer mediation, group decision-making, striving for win-win solutions and the relationship between conflict and prejudice/stereotypes will all be emphasized. A unit on diversity will be presented simultaneously through Language Arts and Health Ed. Finally, the fourth graders will continue with the personal safety/child abuse prevention curriculum *Kids & Co.: Together For Safety*. Units on germs and viruses, computer use and online safety will be added this year. Health Education classes and class meetings will both occur on a weekly basis.

Resources may include: *Creative Conflict Resolution*, more than 200 activities for keeping peace in the classroom by Bill Kriedler; *Elementary Perspectives* by ESR and Bill Kriedler; *Thinking, Feeling, Behaving* by Ann Vernon; *RCCP* (Resolving Conflicts Creatively Program) by Linda Lantieri; *Kids & Co.: Together for Safety*. *Web Wise Kids*; *NetSmartz*.