



WISSAHICKON SCHOOL DISTRICT

Elementary Curriculum Information for Parents

Grade 5

Fifth Grade is an exciting time for students. There are multiple learning opportunities offered throughout the school day with a strong emphasis on developing the whole child: academically, socially, and emotionally.

The classroom schedules have been designed to create large, uninterrupted blocks of instructional time; in addition, the 30-minute, “Practice, Intervention and Enrichment”, known as PIE time, will allow for further differentiation and individualization of instruction for all students. Our K-5 schools follow a 12-day rotation cycle for the Encore classes, which includes Art, Music, Health and Physical Education, Library, and School Counseling. Recess is a time when our students take a break from learning in the classroom in order to engage in more informal interactions with their peers. Recess supports the development of social skills and the overall health and well-being of our students. During this time, students engage in unstructured play and make choices, develop rules for play, and practice important social skills such as sharing, taking turns, being a good sport, cooperating, listening to others, and solving conflicts.

If you have any questions regarding your child’s educational program, please contact your child’s teacher for more information.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

The English Language Arts program in Wissahickon is an intensive exploration of oral, visual, and technological communication. In fifth grade, students follow the language and literacy framework, which provides a structure to help students construct meaning in their lives through reading and writing. Skills taught in fifth grade include:

- Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words;
- Read with accuracy and fluency to support comprehension;
- Cite textual evidence by quoting accurately from the text to explain what the text says explicitly and make inferences;
- Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources;
- Read and comprehend literary nonfiction and informational text on grade level, reading independently and proficiently;
- Determine a theme of a text from details in the text;
- Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text;
- Write informative texts using facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic;
- Write narratives with an awareness of style;
- Write an opinion text with reasons that are supported by facts and details and drawn from credible sources;
- Choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely;
- Demonstrate a grade appropriate command of the conventions of standard English grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.
- Use cursive writing when completing assignments.



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Wissahickon uses *Wonders*, by McGraw-Hill, as the core English-Language Arts program. Using a rich range of diverse print and digital media, *Wonders* provides the instructional support and materials to teach the rigor, intent, and depth of the Pennsylvania Core Standards.

MATHEMATICS

The Wissahickon Mathematics program is a dynamic curriculum integrating the computation, problem-solving, and the use of manipulatives and mathematical tools. Students in fifth grade are taught the following concepts:

- Understand operations with whole numbers to perform operations including decimals;
- Using the four mathematical operations to solve problems with fractions;
- Graph points on coordinate plane;
- Classify two-dimensional figures into categories based on their properties;
- Interpret data using appropriate scale; apply concepts of volume to solve problems.

As the core Mathematics program, Wissahickon uses the *Everyday Math 4*, developed at the University of Chicago. The program is infused with pre-algebraic concepts, such as balance, equality, function, and proportional reasoning. To help develop students' mathematics fact fluency, the district currently subscribes to *First in Math*, a web-based program that encourages students to practice basic mathematics facts while also honing their problem-solving skills.

ENCORE SUBJECTS

Fifth grade students also study Art, Health and Physical Education, Library, and Music. Additionally, all students have the opportunity to work with our School Counselor as they develop their academic, career, and social skills. Students attend these encore classes on a weekly basis. In addition to the General Music program, fifth graders who wish to begin instrumental music instruction have the opportunity to enroll in the school orchestra or band program.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Students in fifth grade pursue a study of early United States history with a focus on history, geography, economics, and civics and government. Units of study in fifth grade include: *The Age of Exploration*, *Building the First Colonies*, *New England Colonies*, *Middle Colonies*, *The Southern Colonies*, and *The Colonies Unite* (events that lead to the American Revolution). During Social Studies, students are engaged in classroom discussions, research, literature selections, simulations and explorations, digital learning, as well as reading and writing assignments.

SCIENCE

Wissahickon fifth graders study a Science curriculum based on three hands-on kits: Earth's Changing Surface, Energy, and Human Body in Motion. During these explorations, students act as scientists following the scientific process, making hypotheses, and testing their conjectures. They revise their thinking based on experiments, collecting and organizing data, and then analyzing that data to develop new understandings. It is an inquiry-based program supplemented by both related literature and informational texts.