

2011–2012



PARENT GUIDE *to Elementary Curriculum*

Fourth Grade

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

MATHEMATICS

SCIENCE

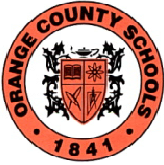
SOCIAL STUDIES

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WORLD LANGUAGE



Orange County Board of Education

200 East King Street
Hillsborough, NC 27278

August, 2011

Dear Parents/Guardians:

This Orange County Schools Curriculum Guide reflects the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study* for students in grades K-5. It is designed to give you an overview of the content students study in grades K-5 as well as the variety skills students need in order to be successful. More in-depth information can be found about specific subjects and skills by visiting the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction at its web site www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum.

It is important to understand that reading and writing skills are process skills that students learn and master in grades K-12; consequently, there are no grade specific skills or month-by-month sequential topics in reading and writing. Instead, it is the level of complexity with which students are able to analyze, interpret, generalize, and hypothesize that changes from grade to grade. As students advance from grade to grade the text levels that students will read and work with across content areas becomes more difficult. Finally, vocabulary and grammatical techniques become more advanced as students progress.

Through this Guide, we hope to provide you with enough information to enable you to discuss curriculum with your child and his/her teacher(s). The Orange County Schools teachers are happy to discuss curriculum in depth so that you have knowledge of how our district works to ensure that each student reaches her/his potential.

The Standards-Based Report Card for Grades K-5, which we began using in 2006-2007, reports more accurately how students are performing in relation to state described proficiency standards. Should you desire more information about how the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and the Orange County Report Card align, please ask your child's teacher to discuss this with you.

Finally, we believe that all students deserve the best teachers and the best educational opportunities possible. To this end, we in Orange County Schools commit ourselves to plan and deliver a purposeful program of study that challenges all students to be learners and generators of knowledge and maximizes their many and varied abilities.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can provide additional information or assistance to you, your family, and your Orange County Schools student(s).

Sincerely,

Denise Morton, Ed.D, Chief Academic Officer

Lisa Ann Napp

Lisa Ann Napp, Ed.D, Director of Elementary Instruction

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Students in fourth grade apply reading strategies and skills automatically, flexibly, and strategically to comprehend fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama. They read for literary experience, to gain information, and to perform a task. They use a variety of strategies and writing process elements to compose fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama. They become increasingly proficient in active listening, speaking, and using media and technology. They deepen and extend their understanding and use of English language conventions in oral presentations and written products. Fourth grade students:

- Explore a wide range of texts and their distinguishing features
- Make personal responses to texts
- Extend and refine their understanding through literary discussions
- Expand vocabulary through wide reading, word study, exposure to content, and discussion
- Apply comprehension strategies critically, creatively, and strategically.

Oral competencies fourth grade students should exhibit include:

- Active listening by asking questions, paraphrasing, interpreting speakers' verbal and non-verbal messages, interpreting speakers' purposes and intent
- Demonstrating understanding of speaking by appropriate usage of pronouns, subject/verb agreement, verb tense consistency, and subject consistency
- Identifying areas of interest for inquiry and research
- Elaborating on information and ideas by using compound sentences, regular and irregular verbs, adverbs, prepositions
- Making oral presentations with an awareness of purpose and audience.

Fourth grade students must exhibit more sophisticated skills in writing by:

- **Composing a draft that conveys major ideas and maintains focus on the topic with relevant, supporting details**
- **Routinely using correct capitalization, punctuation, and spelling high frequency words**
- **Writing for a variety of purposes and audiences**
- **Using writing as a tool for learning**
- **Using media and technological resources for research**
- **Producing work that uses increasingly advanced knowledge of grammar and language conventions**
- **Exploring and applying crafts/techniques of authors as they write**
- **Composing multiple paragraphs that demonstrate cohesion by logical sequence, time sequence of events, and conversation.**
- **Understanding the five features of effective writing: focus, organization, support and elaboration, style, and conventions**

Students spend from two to three hours each day engaged in a study of English Language Arts.



MATHEMATICS

Within the K-8 grade span, the North Carolina Standard Course of Study is organized around five strands; they are: Number and Operations, Measurement, Geometry, Data Analysis and Probability, and Algebra. The content becomes increasingly complex and the expectations for students more demanding as they progress from grade to grade.

MATHEMATICS – continued

Fourth grade students are expected to:

- **Read, write, model, and compute with non-negative rational numbers**
- **Understand and use perimeter and area**
- **Recognize and use geometric properties and relationships**
- **Understand and use graphs, probability, and data analysis**
- **Demonstrate an understanding of mathematical relationships**

Students spend approximately one hour each day engaged in a study of mathematics.



SCIENCE

The focus of science for fourth grade students is on an analysis of systems and learning how they work. Students learn that systems consist of combinations of organisms, machines, objects, ideas, and numbers; that systems have boundaries, components, resources, and feedback. As they analyze systems, students understand the relationship of mass to energy and objects to organization.

Fourth grade students make observations and conduct investigations to better understand:

- **Animal behavior and adaptation**
- **Composition and uses of rocks and minerals**
- **Magnetism and electricity**
- **How food provides energy and materials for growth and repair of the body**



SOCIAL STUDIES

Fourth grade students focus on a study of North Carolina. They explore geographic regions, landforms, climate, and resources of the state. They learn about the state's social, economic, and political institutions as well as build a base of knowledge about economic principles and technological developments affecting the past and present. Students study the diverse groups who have contributed to the development of the state as they analyze how geography affected relationships. Students are expected to draw parallels between contemporary issues and their historical origins as they:

- **Examine the importance of the multiple roles played by different ethnic groups in the development of North Carolina**
- **Apply the five themes of geography to North Carolina and its people**
- **Trace the history of colonization in North Carolina and evaluate its significance on people's ideas**
- **Analyze how social and political institutions of the state have influenced behavior and society**
- **Evaluate the impact of basic economic principles on North Carolina**
- **Recognize how technology influences changes within North Carolina.**



INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY SKILLS

Students in the fourth grade are introduced to how to apply criteria to determine appropriate information resources, how to use appropriate strategies when reading for information and for enjoyment, using technology tools and skills, doing collaborative research and understanding safe, ethical and responsible use of information and technology.

The fourth grade curriculum provides structured, supervised learning experiences that require students to:

- Use various types of resources to gather information (including print and online media).
- Use relevant Sources of Information for an assigned task.
- Use reliable Sources of Information.
- Implement appropriate reading strategies when reading for information.
- Explain the importance of relevant characteristics in various genres.
- Use a variety of technology tools to gather data and information (e.g., Web-based resources, e-books, online communication tools, etc.).
- Use a variety of technology tools to organize data and information (e.g., word processor, graphic organizer, audio and visual recording, online collaboration tools, etc.).
- Use technology tools to present data and information (multimedia, audio and visual recording, online collaboration tools, etc.).
- Implement a research process by collaborating effectively with other students.
- Understand the guidelines for responsible use of technology hardware.
- Understand ethical behavior (copyright, not plagiarizing, netiquette) when using resources.
- Understand internet safety precautions (personal information, passwords, etc.).



MUSIC

The purpose of the music program is to provide experiences and opportunities which develop the child's creativity, growth in musical knowledge and skills, and an appreciation for a variety of cultures and musical styles. The focus in grades K-2 is to create, respond to, and perform music. In grades 3-5, these skills are refined through more in-depth study. The music program reinforces the total curriculum by providing integrated learning opportunities.

Students engage in creating, performing, and responding to music. Singing, playing instruments, creating, moving, and listening to music enable them to acquire musical skills. Along with these capabilities, students in grades 3-5 begin to develop the more complex skills of evaluation, analysis, and appreciation of music. Opportunities for development of essential knowledge and attitudes are provided through a variety of activities and experiences.

In fourth grade, music reading skills are enhanced through recorder instruction. Choral experiences are provided as well as other opportunities for performance.



VISUAL ARTS

Students in grade four are introduced to the four basic areas of the visual arts: art production, art history, art criticism, and aesthetics. Students display increased manual dexterity. They use a broader range of subject matter and media. Ideas which have an impact on their art are incorporated from a variety of sources to include individual readings out of books, magazines, and reference materials. They grow more sophisticated in depicting movement, relationships, and emotions in their work. Students develop a

VISUAL ARTS – continued

sense of history, including an ability to distinguish between art created by different cultures. Students begin to enjoy knowing and sharing interesting facts about various artists and the times in which they lived. Class discussion about artwork should show greater verbal fluency, the incorporation of selected art vocabulary, and a focus on expressing of oneself in a positive manner.

Fourth grade students will continue to study the elements of art and the principles of design. They will begin to demonstrate their understanding of these principles by creating more detailed and individual works of art. They will begin to see the connection between history, culture, and art.

HEALTHFUL LIVING

A comprehensive healthful living education program is designed to help each student develop pro-active health promotion behaviors. Students should develop positive attitudes toward regular physical activity and its effect on health. The following educational descriptors are reflective of the goals and objectives found in grades 4-5 Healthful Living Education Standard Course of Study.

By the end of grade five:

Students will be aware of the important health risks for their age group and will comprehend some of the major influences on their own health, especially including ability to recognize the relationship between healthy nutrition and exercise in weight management; analyze and explore how media images can influence perception of a desirable body size, shape, and complexion, and acquire skills for providing first aid for choking victims, including demonstrating the Heimlich maneuver.

Students will be able to differentiate between positive and negative stress and demonstrate effective ways to deal with each one; identify situations that might lead to violence; demonstrate the ability to seek help or assistance for bullying. Additionally, students should be

able to utilize the basic information on food labels to make decisions about the nutritional value of various foods; demonstrate the ability to select healthful food and beverage choices that from the food groups of My Pyramid.

Students will know and understand the value of being physically fit and the types of activities that contribute to total fitness; analyze the relationship between physical activity and nutrition and the cardiovascular system; demonstrate accuracy skills necessary for participation in a variety of lead-up games and sports; describe the mechanics of skill performance in a variety of activity settings; and choose to participate in structured and purposeful activity.

Students will be able to create movement sequence routines using balance, jumping, landing, weight transfer, and rolling movements; complete a valid and reliable pre and post health-enhancing fitness assessment, including monitoring of the heart; regularly encourages others and refrains from putdown statements; identify opportunities for regular physical activity in school and at home; demonstrate elements of the FIT guidelines to develop personal cardiovascular fitness levels, and assesses and takes responsibility for his/her own behavior problems without blaming others.

Healthful Living Focus Areas – Grade 4

- **Stress management**
- **Bullying and violence prevention**
- **Short term and long term effects of tobacco and other drugs**
- **Health related fitness testing**
- **Create movement sequence routines using balance, jumping, landing, weight transfer, and rolling movements**
- **The mechanics of performance**



WORLD LANGUAGE

In the Elementary School Foreign Language Program, the primary goal is the development of listening and speaking skills and cultural awareness through concrete experiences. Because language acquisition begins with listening, successful language learning activities emphasize comprehension rather than speaking at the beginning stages.

Successful language learning activities involve students in interpersonal communication as they learn songs, recite poems, and give oral commands. At this level, reading and writing are not introduced; instead, emphasis is placed on the oral language necessary for students to become good readers and writers later on.



MODIFIED CURRICULUM

Because some students learn at a more rapid pace than others, because some students come to school who speak a language other than English, and because some students require additional assistance to be successful in learning the North Carolina Standard Course of Study, accommodations are made which modify and/or adapt the curriculum to meet students' needs. Students who qualify for accommodations may have extended time to complete assignments or take tests or they may have the opportunity to work on assignments that have been compressed. The pace of the lessons may be slowed down or increased depending on students' needs.

STATE ASSESSMENTS GIVEN IN FOURTH GRADE

- **End-of-Grade Test (EOG)**
Components include:
Reading
Math – Calculator Active
Calculator Inactive
- **Writing Assessment**

