

## כיתה ד

The fourth grade program is rich in content and emphasizes the development of organizational and study skills. Now proficient in basic reading, writing, and mathematics, students build on these skills to analyze texts and ideas, synthesize information, think critically about issues, develop their writing, and support their claims with evidence from the text. Students in fourth grade work over the course of the year to prepare a portfolio of their work. Students thoughtfully select pieces of work and reflect on themselves as learners through that work. Students lead portfolio conferences, in which their parents and their teachers participate, in the spring.

A milestone of the fourth grade is the students' first experience with external testing, for which they spend time preparing. In addition, students participate in an exploration of water and water habitats as they spend several hours on a schooner. The fourth grade's yearlong community service commitment is to work with the Ansche Chesed Men's Shelter in which students plan a three-course menu and spend time cooking and preparing a full meal.

## ART

Fourth Graders work individually or in pairs on a number of projects. Skills develop in various areas, including using a range of materials to create a piece of work, designing

and creating Judaic with clay and metal, and exploring the use of layered color painting (by looking at the work of Vincent Van Gogh). One project, related to their classroom study of the Rainforest, uses art as a means of cultural communication. As part of an exchange program with students in the Guatemalan Rainforest, students share aspects of their life and culture through their paintings. Finally, still life is explored through the concept of monochrome and self-portrait is practiced by using mirrors. .

An annual art trip is planned to coincide with some aspect of the classroom curriculum.

### עברית HEBREW

Fourth grade students are divided into groups according to Hebrew language proficiency. This arrangement makes it possible for students to study at the level best suited to their needs.

The language series on which the program in these grades is based, and which provides the continuity from class to class and year to year, is *Aleph-Bet Y'ladim Lomdim Ivrit*. A sequential program, *Aleph-Bet Y'ladim Lomdim Ivrit* follows a structured linguistic progression and integrates the four language skills – listening, speaking, reading, and writing – in each unit. Based on the most current understanding of language acquisition in children, it exposes students to multiple genres, including stories, conversations, telephone conversations, poems, songs, albums, journals, bulletin board notices, and the like. Students are challenged to speak and write, using the language patterns they

are learning in both familiar and new contexts. Additional reading materials and language exercises developed by the school complement the published units and ensure that students have ample opportunity to practice their emerging language forms and structures within a naturally occurring, functional context.

In the advanced classes, students read short stories, write extensively, and speak in full sentences using verbs in several conjugations, in all tenses, and in active and passive voices. In addition, they prepare and perform their own plays, and make oral presentations.

In the intermediate groups, students review and reinforce their basic reading skills and learn to conjugate verbs in present and past tense and the infinitive form; in addition, they study agreement among nouns, verbs, and adjectives in gender and number.

All students work on projects that allow them to apply the skills they learn. For example, students interview Hebrew speaking staff and faculty and create virtual tours of places in Israel using Google Slides. Hebrew is also spoken throughout the day in class routines and in the Jewish Studies program.

## **JEWISH STUDIES**

The fourth grade Torah curriculum continues the study of Isaac, Rebecca, Jacob, and Esau with a close reading of *B'reshit* (Genesis) 25-32. Key goals for the year include identifying parts of speech in context; recognizing direct speech and embedded speech and identifying the speaker in each case; and analyzing complex verb forms according to *shorashim* (roots), prefixes and suffixes, and tense. In addition, students review the use of *vav hahipuch* (the conversive vav) and ways of recognizing textual problems and anomalies.

Students work together to analyze the Torah text and create their own commentary, as well as to analyze classical and modern commentaries that address the same textual problems that they had identified in their own questions. Their interpretive repertoire expands to incorporate big ideas and essential questions.

A new subject in fourth grade is *Mishnah*. Students work in *chevruta* pairs to read and understand the text by identifying key words, verbs, and nouns, compare parts of the text to each other or to parallel texts, and ask and answer questions on the text, and come together as a class to brainstorm and to relate the text to their own experience.

In *t'filah*, the fourth graders continue to fill in the full texts of prayers that they have already studied in excerpted form. The focus this year is on completing the *Sh'ma* and the *b'rachot* preceding and following it. Students identify the main themes of each prayer based on key words, class discussions, and activities, analyze the text, relate it to their own personal experience, and write their individual commentaries on it. In addition

to the *Sh'ma* and its *b'rachot*, fourth graders also learn new *b'rachot* for other occasions, as well as new sections of *Hallel* and *Kabbalat Shabbat*.

In *chagim*, students encounter new material and ideas that build upon what they already know: they formally study the laws and selected prayers of *Rosh Hashanah*, *Yom Kippur*, *Sukkot*, *Chanukah*, *Purim*, and *Pesach* from an Israeli school children's compendium of Jewish law, *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch – M'kor Chaim*. During *Sukkot*, students study what makes a *Sukkah* Kosher, and then wrote a journal entry from the point of view of the *Sukkah*. The *Pesach* unit is focused on the "Seder of the Seder": what is the order of the seder, and how does that order help us connect to the exodus from Egypt?

## LANGUAGE ARTS

In the fourth grade, reading and writing are fully established tools for learning and communicating across the content areas. They continue, as in previous years, to work hand in hand, facilitating connections with one another, not only as skills, but also, through the workshop approach, as coordinated systems of self-discovery and thinking and talking about personal experience.

In reading workshop, key goals for the year include using reading comprehension strategies effectively, including visualizing, questioning, connecting, predicting, inferring, and interpreting; identifying main ideas and supporting details; explaining how a text supports a claim or an opinion; comparing and contrasting characters and stories; and becoming a supportive learning community in which reading experiences are shared. At

the same time, the students review and reinforce previously learned skills of decoding, comprehension, and analyzing plot, character, and setting.

Students continue to read many of the same genres they read in previous years: novels, non-fiction books, short stories, biography, and selected poetry. They also formally study reading comprehension as a test skill.

In writing workshop, students continue to use a writer's notebook as a place to collect inspirations for writing. They then develop them into drafts, and revise and edit them with their writing partners. Genres covered during the year include personal narratives, responses to non-fiction reading, structured paragraphs, and poetry. Students regularly share their writing pieces and celebrate their "published" pieces as a learning community.

Key skills that are introduced or reinforced in the fourth grade include the use of topic sentences and supporting details, writing paragraphs that consist of one complete idea, writing multi-paragraph essays that incorporate introductions and conclusions, using texts to support a thesis, varying word choice and sentence length and structure, incorporating thoughts, feelings, dialogue, and inner monologues, and using quotes and other punctuation marks. Students continue to work on spelling, punctuation, capitalization, vocabulary, language, sequencing, and formatting and presentation. They also gain experience writing in Google Docs- drafting, revising, editing, and sharing their work. The steps of the writing process, with which they are already familiar, become gradually integrated in their writing.

## MATHEMATICS

The computational skills learned in fourth grade are significantly more challenging than students have encountered previously; at the same time, the curriculum continues to encourage mathematical thinking and understanding. Students work with tangible objects to support their early learning of new ideas and operations, undertake projects that incorporate real-life applications of the skills they have learned, and create their own problems and games to express and reinforce their grasp of the concepts they study.

Key goals for the year include multiplying two-digit numbers; understanding division; identifying and using equivalent fractions and decimals; computing perimeter, area, and volume; graphing growth; and strengthening word-problem solving skills in all topic areas.

The following topics are studied in fourth grade:

- Measurement
- Data analysis
- Review and extension of addition, subtraction, and estimation
- Arrays (factors and products)
- Multiplication – review of times tables, two-digit computation

- Division
- Fractions, including equivalent fractions
- Decimals
- Line and bar graphs
- Geometry – lines, area, three-dimensional (cubes), angles, triangles, polygons
- Probability
- Solving multi-step problems
- Test preparation

## MUSIC

The fourth graders enter their second full year of recorder instruction. They continue learning about the instrument by practicing higher notes, exploring new rhythmic patterns, composing their own melodies and playing them. Students apply their recorder skills to playing pieces in preparation for year two of the Carnegie Hall Link Up! program, as well as the annual school concert. Through this curriculum and program, the students learn about classical composers and their works and come to appreciate music's building blocks, from the simplest to the most complex pieces. Students study excerpts of masterworks by composers such as Haydn, Beethoven, Mozart and Bach.

Singing is central to the fourth grade musical experience. Students in Kitah Dalet expand their repertoire of Hebrew and Israeli songs, with focus on pitch accuracy, as well as understanding the song lyrics. Opportunities to perform include the Chanukah Zimriyah celebration and the annual school concert.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

In fourth grade, after reviewing basic skills and techniques in various sports, the students move on to formally playing games. These situations give students the chance to practice skills in context and to learn game strategy, teamwork, and sportsmanship.

By the fourth grade, students have developed mastery of basic game playing skills. New sports like volleyball and badminton are also introduced, as well as new structures like tournament-play. In this format, students get an opportunity to compete in several days of activity to promote fair play, healthy competition, and to put previously learned skills to use.

## **THEMATIC STUDIES, SCIENCE, & SOCIAL SCIENCE**

The fourth grade theme is habitats, with a specific focus on rainforests. Students look at this theme through geographical and environmental lenses. They study the ecology, wildlife, flora, and cultures of the rainforest, and in connection with these studies, they work on a variety of projects, including creating terrariums and Google Slide presentations.

In their study of geography, students use maps, atlases, globes, and Google Earth to learn basic geography concepts and terms and understand the relationship between

culture and geography. Later they explore the layers of the rainforest, understanding how the differing levels of light, among other things, help to shape multiple habitats in the rainforest. As part of the rainforest study, students participate in an art exchange program which matches them with a partner class in a rainforest habitat in Guatemala.

The science component of the theme study is inquiry-based and investigative in nature; students learn about the rainforest ecosystem and the plants and animals that thrive in it from experiments and simulations;

Students prepare an individual research project, choosing one of the plants or animals of the rainforest. The resources available to them are primarily books, other printed matter, and the internet; in addition, the class goes on field trips and listens to recordings to help them visualize and think about how animals coexist in this habitat. The culminating event, at which the students present their projects, takes the form of an eco-tour of the rainforest.

In addition to the written research paper, students communicate what they have learned through discussions and oral presentations, as well as in homework assignments, artistic representations, models, and poster displays.

In science, the overarching theme for the year is systems. This begins with a unit on simple machines in which students understand how parts work together to form a whole. As a culminating project students build Rube Goldberg inspired machines. After this, students use this same lens to study the skeletal system. Students learn how

ligaments, muscles, and bones work together to help us move. Fourth graders complete their year of science with a study of plants. Students study the different parts of plants and how those various parts work together to help the plant survive. As part of this unit students plant flowers and vegetables in our terrace garden and observe them as they move through their life cycles.

### **CODING**

Students have a weekly coding class where they explore structures of code such as sequencing, loops, conditionals, and events. Students explore these concepts through a series of "unplugged" games and activities, as well as through iPad-based exercises using block-based languages. Students apply their understanding of coding through game design, digital illustrations, and programming robots to navigate obstacles and follow simple commands.

