THE ACADEMY FOR GIFTED CHILDREN
CURRICULUM OUTLINE
GRADE 4

EXPECTATIONS:

- students will strive for excellence as they experience a challenging and exciting learning environment
- students will uphold high expectations for quality in all facets of work
- students will develop co-operative learning skills through integrated curriculum, thus developing life skills and conflict resolution skills
- students will develop an appreciation for books through read aloud, silent reading, research and reading groups
- students will develop confidence, poise and self-esteem by integrating drama and oral presentations into the curriculum
- students will develop ownership and responsibility for their own learning through the use of an organizer and homework binders

CURRICULUM OUTLINE

LANGUAGE ARTS

Language arts consists of four main components: literature appreciation, spelling, grammar, and the writing process.

GENERAL OUTCOMES:
The students will:

- be introduced to literary works of quality
- continue to develop literal, interpretive and critical thinking skills
- recognize the elements of a short story and the relationship of these elements to the novel
- develop an awareness of literary terminology (i.e. alliteration, atmosphere, dialect, dialogue, fate, metaphor, simile, theme, foreshadowing, antagonist, protagonist and symbolism)
- develop an understanding of and appreciation for quality literature
- continue to develop and apply speaking, listening and writing skills
- develop a sensitivity to words, their sounds and phonetic pronunciation and understand that words have the power to convey meaning
- vocabulary expansion based on novel study
- comparative analysis between a variety of literary devices and genres.

LITERATURE APPRECIATION

SHORT STORIES

We will begin the academic year by reading short stories from the Junior Great Book Series 5. Students will participate in shared reading and independent reading. Learning to formulate their own questions and developing critical and higher level thinking skills increases students' appreciation for deeper analytical and interpretive meaning.

NOVEL STUDY

The novels that will be studied over the course of the academic year will be thematically based.

THEME: Kindness, inner beauty, tolerance, acceptance, overcoming adversity
Wonder – R.J. Palacio

THEME: the power of nature's beauty, coping with death, meaning of life, dealing with conflict, overcoming obstacles, development of friendship
The Secret Garden – Frances Hodgson Burnett

THEME: loyalty, good versus evil, relationships with family, love, loneliness, pride
A Wrinkle in Time -- Madeleine L'Engle

THEME: identity, appearance vs. reality, innocence, justice vs. injustice
The Prince and the Pauper – Mark Twain

POETRY
Free verse poetry will be studied. In-depth analysis of various poems will enable the students to discuss the mood and messages behind each of the poems. Students will use the provided models to write their own poetry.

SUPPLEMENTARY READING
Students will be expected to read at least three supplementary novels including fiction, biographies and autobiographies and complete a book report for each novel. Book reports play a critical role in contributing to the students' skills in literary analysis. The appropriateness of the reading material will be determined by the core teacher according to initial assessment and the student's ongoing progress.

SPELLING
Students will learn the basic spelling rules. The weekly spelling list is partially derived from basic vocabulary that is encountered on a day-to-day basis, as well as novel and Theme related key words.

GRAMMAR
The grammar program will review and reinforce material learned in Grade Two and Grade Three, and introduce the following concepts and skills:

PARTS OF SPEECH
Identify, diagram, and correctly use:
- the eight parts of speech (noun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, conjunction, interjection, pronoun), and prepositional phrases
- the four types of verbs (transitive active, transitive passive, intransitive complete, intransitive linking)
- the basic parts of the sentence (subject, predicate, direct object, indirect object, predicate nominative, predicate adjective) in simple, complex and compound sentences

PUNCTUATION
- colon before a list, between numbers in time, and after a greeting
- commas around a noun of direct address
- hyphen in prefixes before proper nouns or proper adjectives, in compound words used as adjectives, in fractions
- semicolon in compound sentences in which the coordinating conjunction is omitted

APPLICATION
- correctly use intransitive and transitive verbs (sit/set, lie/lay, rise/raise)
- use verb tenses consistently throughout a piece of writing; refer to literature in literary present tense
- begin paragraphs with appropriate topic sentences
- write different types of paragraphs: narrative, descriptive, expository, and persuasive

WRITING PROCESS
Students will:
- build their skills in the various stages of the writing process, including: generating ideas for writing through discussion and brainstorming, selecting a topic, determining the purpose for writing and the audience to be addressed, making an outline, writing an initial draft, revising and editing to create a polished end product
- begin to write for more complex purposes (e.g. to present and discuss their opinions and viewpoints, to pose questions, and to record information)
- write in the following forms, adhering to conventions of structure, tone, and style: formal and personal letter writing, story writing, poetry, autobiographical and biographical sketches, research projects, book reports and script writing
- in an organized, cohesive manner, write narrative, expository, persuasive, and descriptive paragraphs, which include topic sentences, supporting details, and transitional devices
- write short essays which include topic sentences, supporting details, and transitional devices
- write formal literary responses during timed writing situations, using supporting details from the text and appropriate verb tense (literary present tense)
- include a properly formatted title page, table of contents, and works cited page with reports
- word-process their own stories and reports, integrating graphics from the computer

- participate in regularly scheduled writing conferences with the instructor to discuss, monitor, and facilitate the student's progress in the development of his/her writing skills

THEME

The students will explore the following themes:

CANADA, MEDIEVAL TIMES, LEGENDARY/EXCEPTIONAL PEOPLE, THE SILK ROUTES

Within the themes there will be a solid integration of Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Objectives which encourages the students to engage in higher levels of thinking, as well as challenging them to academic "risk taking" learning experiences. Theme work provides the students with opportunities to work within their preferred learning styles and encourages the students to explore and experience all the different learning styles.

LOGIC

The students will be working out of several Logic activity books, which will stimulate and challenge their intellectual curiosity. In addition, students will create their own logic puzzles and present accurate solutions to their puzzles. These exercises are geared to sharpen students' cognitive and critical thinking skills. They are required to define, clarify, infer, problem solve, draw conclusions, analyze, synthesize and evaluate specific information.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES/AWARENESS

Students are given the opportunity to explore and critically assess environmental topics that affect society, focusing specifically on issues that are featured in the news. Students will be engaged in a variety of activities, such as reading and evaluating news articles, researching and debating. Students will be exposed to the various forms of media and the environmental concerns addressed in each. They will develop the ability to evaluate information presented in the news, identify strengths and potential weaknesses of the news stories, and develop their own opinions about the issues being studied and their impact on everyday life.

THE ARTS

DRAMA

Drama plays a major role in helping students build their confidence and increase their self-esteem. Students will be encouraged to express themselves freely and creatively. Students will be exposed to a variety of techniques in drama (including mime, tableaux, improvisation, writing and directing), create their own drama skits, incorporate elements of novels studied to prepare and present creative scenes, participate in other role-playing exercises. Students will integrate a variety of voice skills and develop a heightened awareness of body movement. The highlight of the drama programme is P.A.C.E.'s Festival of the Arts.

VISUAL ARTS

Art will be integrated into literature appreciation and each theme and will incorporate many opportunities to work with different media and techniques (e.g. posters, collages, sketching, models, and painting).

MUSIC

Music and movement encourages students to bring their bodies in harmony with the music. The students learn to read complex rhythm patterns, to sight sing, recognize and identify rhythmic dictation and complete ear training exercises.

MATHEMATICS

The following strands are included in P.A.C.E.'s Math Curriculum:

- Social-Emotional Learning (application of social-emotional learning skills to mathematical processes i.e. problem solving, reasoning, reflection, communicating, critical thinking) *ongoing throughout the year
- Number (Quantity Relationships in whole numbers and decimals, Proportional Relationships among fractions, decimals, percent and ratios), Fractions, Problem Solving)
- Algebra (Pattern Rules, Algebraic Expressions, Solving Inequalities, Specialized class for coding)
- Data (Collection and Organization of Data, Data Relationships, Probability)
- Spatial Sense (Congruency, Cartesian Plane, Translations, Reflections and Rotations, Measurement of length, area, mass and capacity of parallelograms, triangles, and volume of a triangular prism using appropriate metric units through conversion, elapsed time, angles)
- Financial Literacy (Transactions including sales tax) *ongoing throughout the year

SCIENCE

The following strands are included in P.A.C.E.'s Science and Technology Curriculum:

- Stem Skills and Connections - STEM skills and emerging technologies, practical applications of science and technology and contributions that people with diverse lived experiences have made to science and technology in the context of the other strands
- Life Systems – Human Health and Body Systems
- Matter And Energy – Chemistry – Locally Designed by P.A.C.E.
- Structures And Mechanisms – Machines and Their Mechanisms
- Earth And Space Systems – Conservation of Energy and Resources

Emphasis is placed on scientific investigation, innovation and creativity, collaboration, critical thinking and problem solving, hands-on discovery and experimentation.

TECHNOLOGY AND CODING

The Surface Go will be used as a tool to facilitate enhanced learning experiences in the classroom, to hone executive functioning skills, to further strengthen web-based research skills, and to improve keyboarding skills. . The Mathematics and Science and Technology curriculum expectations will be integrated into the coding curriculum including writing and executing code (SCRATCH) in investigations and when modelling concepts, with a focus on producing different types of output.

FRENCH

The objective of the French programme is to develop communications skills in both the receptive and expressive aspects of the language. The four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing will be developed. In order to achieve these objectives the activities will include skits, songs, educational games, role-playing activities, reading short novels, guided compositions, dictations, writing letters, diaries, post cards, word searches and crossword puzzles.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The physical education program encompasses healthy living and a variety of sports: soccer, volleyball, basketball, badminton and track and field activities. Students will be evaluated on their level of participation and attitude towards each sport in addition to overall progress and acquisition of skill. Breathing techniques as well as movement exercises will be introduced to hone independent relaxation and overall wellness.

CLASS TRIPS

A variety of trips will be planned throughout the year to support the specific themes studied.

EVALUATION

This is an ongoing process, including both formative assessment (observation of daily work, notes and homework, student-teacher conferences, process work, class participation, attitude towards learning) and summative evaluation (activities, projects, tests and quizzes, presentations, reports, speeches). A variety of methods will be used for assessing and evaluating knowledge and comprehension, application, thinking and inquiry and communication skills. Most importantly, it is critical for the child to be happy and feel that he/she is progressing and feeling successful, confident and self-assured.

ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Students are expected to keep their desks and personal space neat and binders well organized; this will prevent things from getting lost and actively teach the children to become organized and responsible for their things.

STUDENT AGENDA AND HOMEWORK

- Students record their homework in their agendas before starting any work.
- Students are encouraged to effectively use the 45 minutes of homework time at the end of the academic school day to begin their homework. It will often include unfinished class work in theme, math, literature, writing, grammar and spelling, etc.
- An additional 45 minutes of work to be completed at home will be given on a regular basis in order to establish good work habits.

HELPFUL HINTS

Please check your child's school bag each night. You may find notices from school, left over lunches or incomplete work or projects. Please help to encourage responsibility in remembering and completing homework.

CALENDAR

A calendar will be sent home at the beginning of each month. Please post the monthly calendar on the fridge, or where it is visible. Highlight due dates, tests, field trips, or other important events on the calendar.