



## **Upper Elementary Curriculum Overview**

Lead Teachers: Ethan Dauphinais and Courtney Nettell

Assistant Teachers: Lisa Bentley

### **Upper Elementary Practical Life and Social/Emotional Curriculum**

The Practical Life curriculum is a series of simple, everyday activities designed to help young students develop a sense of independence, self-confidence and responsibility, while indirectly strengthening their coordination, developing a sense of order, and lengthening their concentration. This area focuses on skills that allow children to take care of themselves and their environment. Social skill development is an integral part of our program; developing students' emotional resilience and fostering a sense of independence in navigating social dynamics is a critical focus of the Upper Elementary program.

A focus on the development of executive functioning takes place during the Upper Elementary years. It is a time to pay particular attention to how a student is organizing their work, day, movement and plans throughout the day. Each student has a way to track their assignments (both classwork and homework) and reflect regularly on their work, executive functioning, and collaboration within the classroom.

Upper Elementary students participate in weekly Skills classes with Mrs. Nettell and Mr. Dauphinais. Guiding students to understand their unique approaches to learning and their roles as community members through targeted discussion and responsive, real-life applications is paramount to students developing true understanding of the core competencies for Social Emotional Learning. Skills classes will also incorporate focused work in DEIJ. Students are supported by the entire Upper Elementary team to apply what they have learned in Skills class throughout their school days. This allows students to reinforce and solidify their problem solving abilities and independence as individuals and community members, as they increasingly take ownership and responsibility for their education.

### **Social/Emotional Skill Building**

- Continued emphasis on "Grace and Courtesy"
- Responsible decision making
- Conflict resolution and interpersonal problem solving
- Collaboration
- Developing resilience and ability to receive feedback
- Continuing our commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice
- Upper Elementary mentorship program
- Community Service

## **Executive Function and care of environment**

- Organizing physical materials
- Proper use of materials
- Prioritizing appropriate work and budgeting time
- Planning the work cycle independently
- Planning long term projects
- Community jobs

## **Upper Elementary ELA**

The purpose of ELA in Upper Elementary is for students to transition from *learning to read* to *reading to learn*. Through focused lessons in reading comprehension, writing, grammar and vocabulary, students continue to build skills and gain independence in literacy. In the fourth and fifth years, students work in guided reading groups and continue to explore the writing process through a more creative lens while writing short pieces connected to content. There is more of a focus on spelling and grammar skills during this two year cycle. In the 6th year, ELA work becomes truly interdisciplinary as students learn reading, research and writing skills that help them to craft their MMUN position papers, write Lab Reports for Environmental Science, and analyze literature.

### **Reading Skills- Spiraling Curriculum**

- Genre and Purpose
- Strategies for reading different genres
- Fiction story elements
- Nonfiction text features
- Identifying main idea and supporting details
- Retelling vs. Summarizing
- Identifying and using text evidence
- Vocabulary acquisition and use

### **Reading Genre Studies**

- Fiction- realistic, historical, sci-fi, mystery
- Nonfiction articles
- Biography
- Poetry
- Drama- reader's theater
- Global Legends, Myths, Folktales and Fairy Tales
- Realistic Fiction Novel Book Clubs
- Science Fiction and Fantasy Novel Book Clubs
- Historical Fiction Novel Book Clubs

### **Writing**

- Persuasive and Opinion
- Informative: articles, reports, presentations
- Literary analysis
- Poetry

- Fiction
- Legend
- Revision

**Mechanics**

- Complex spelling patterns
- Varied sentence structure
- Uses of capitalization and various punctuation
- Editing

**Upper Elementary Math/Geometry Curriculum**

The purpose of the math and geometry curricula in Upper Elementary is to develop core operational skills, moving from concrete to abstract understanding, and to be able to apply both geometric concepts and special number operations to solve real world problems. Students work with different manipulatives in order to progress to an abstract understanding of the core operations and to build algorithms for solving multi-digit problems while they work to build fluency in their ability to apply basic math facts. 4th and 5th year students are also introduced to operations with fractions, decimals, percentages, and ratios as their understanding of special number operations develops. Students are introduced to area and perimeter concepts for a variety of different shape studies while developing their measurement skills and abstract understanding of angles. In the 6th year, this work culminates with a curriculum focussed on investigation-based learning which works to solidify students' understanding of factors and multiples, comparative rates and ratios, and the application of special number operations. For students who accelerate to a more advanced mathematical program, students will conclude their time in UE working on pre-algebra concepts including linear relationships, developing their abstract understanding of proportional relationships, and working with three-dimensional geometry. Please see below an outline of some of the skills introduced at each year of our three year cycle.

	<b>4th Year</b>	<b>5th Year</b>	<b>6th Year</b>
<b>Computation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiplication/Division facts</li> <li>• Rounding</li> <li>• Comparing/Simplifying Fractions</li> <li>• Fraction operations</li> <li>• Mixed Numbers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-digit multiplication and division</li> <li>• Fraction Operations</li> <li>• Decimal Addition/Subtraction</li> <li>• Factors/Multiples</li> <li>• Negative Numbers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Squaring and Square Roots</li> <li>• Cubing and cube roots</li> <li>• Decimal Multiplication and Division</li> <li>• Ratios and Proportionality</li> <li>• Percentages</li> <li>• Variables and Equations</li> </ul>

<b>Geometry</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lines and Angles</li> <li>● Measurement</li> <li>● Elapsed Time</li> <li>● Area and Perimeter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Triangles</li> <li>● Circles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Surface Area</li> <li>● Volume</li> <li>● Coordinate Geometry</li> <li>● Pythagoras</li> <li>● Congruence/Similarity</li> </ul>
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### **Upper Elementary Science and STEM**

Science in Upper Elementary serves as a bridge from Lower Elementary, where science is more individually explored, to Middle School where students have more formal Science classes. 4th and 5th years spend their time being exposed to different aspects of Biology while 6th years are introduced to geographical science, chemistry, and physics. Lessons are a balance of guided and independent exploration and discussion that move students through the Scientific Method and Engineering Design Process, with a goal of thinking and behaving like scientists.

#### **4/5 Science Curriculum Year 1**

- Animal Classification and Adaptations
- Botany
- Plant Structure
- Geographical Impact of Plant life
- Human/Plant interaction
- Invention Fair

#### **4/5 Science Curriculum Year 2**

- Human Anatomy
- Astronomy
- Geology
- Water Cycle
- Volcanos/Mountains
- Layers of the Earth
- Earth's Crust
- Rotation/Longitude/Latitude
- Valleys, Canyons, Glaciers
- Topography

#### **6th Year Chemistry/Physics**

- Matter
- Exothermic and endothermic reactions
- Density
- Elements
- Light
- Acids/Bases
- Atomic Structure
- Gravity

- Newton's Laws
- Movement
- Electricity
- Friction
- Sound
- Mass/Balance

### **Upper Elementary History/Geography**

The purpose of History and Geography in Upper Elementary is for students to better understand the “how” and “why” behind many of the natural and human-made aspects of our global community. Through our work in these areas, students develop their understanding of world cultures, natural and political geography, and seek to understand the events of the past which have helped to shape civilization today. In the fourth and fifth years, students engage in work designed to enhance their practical vocabulary in these areas, help understand the foundations of modern civilization both globally and in the United States, and continue their exploration of our planet from Lower Elementary through hands-on projects and simulations. In the 6th year, this work culminates with a global civics curriculum which exposes students to different forms of government and social organization as well as engages them in international problem solving through Montessori Model United Nations (MMUN).

#### **Geography**

##### **U.S. Geography (Year 1):**

- Major land forms
- Population and census data
- Geographic impact on economics
- States and Capitals
- Migration within and from outside the U.S.

##### **World Geography (Year 2):**

- Continents and Oceans
- Plate Tectonics
- River Systems
- Political geography
- Major land forms
- Migration

#### **History**

##### **U.S. History (Year 1):**

- Native American culture and daily life
- The Aztec People
- European Exploration and colonization
- Jamestown

- The Pilgrims, Mayflower Compact, and Plymouth Colony
- The Puritans and the creation of Massachusetts
- The international slave trade
- The American Revolution
- The Constitution of the United States
- Sectionalism and Slavery
- The Civil War and Reconstruction

### **Ancient Civilizations (Year 2):**

- Early Humans
- Big game hunters and foragers
- The First Cities
- Society vs. Civilization
- River Civilizations
- Ancient Mesopotamia
- Exploration of ancient cultures/civilizations:
  - Egypt
  - Rome
  - China
  - India
  - Inca

### **Civics (Year 3):**

- Economic Geography
- Political economies
- The United Nations (participation in the Montessori Model United Nations)
- History of international law
- Major forms of government
  - Democracy/Republic
  - Monarchy
  - Theocracy
  - Oligarchy
  - Aristocracy
  - Colonialism
  - Totalitarianism
  - Military Dictatorship
  - Communism
  - Socialism
- The U.S. System of government
  - The three federal branches
  - Federal vs. State power
  - Local Government