Fifth-Grade Curriculum

"Give a man a fish, and he will eat for a day; teach a man to fish, and he will eat for a lifetime."

People learn through experience. The goal of the Blue Room is not only to increase the size of a student's knowledge base but also to create possibilities for student invention and discovery through projects and inquiry.

Language Arts

Reading and writing are integral parts of the Blue Room curriculum. The students will be reading and writing across the curriculum in science, social studies, language arts, Spanish, and computer lab. We will read an assortment of literary works with an emphasis on the classics as well as contemporary works by a variety of authors. Much of our reading material will relate to science and social studies. We will also incorporate current events into our language arts program.

We will study the steps to becoming proficient writers as well as the processes for developing well-written work. The students will learn to use various resources to research topics and write expository papers. The students will be exposed to a variety of poems and have opportunities to write the same. The students will use the writing method of pre-writing, drafting, revising for content, and then editing for grammar and spelling before publishing.

Most days the students will alternate between Readers' or Writers' workshops. The workshops consist of two or more of the following activities:

Readers' Workshop (Students will be required to keep a reader's response journal.)

> **Mini-lesson** – A short lesson on some aspect of reading, such as reading comprehension strategies, identifying elements of plot, studying genre, or guided reading (the teacher selects a level-appropriate text and provides supportive teaching as the group co-reads the text).
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> **Independent Reading** – Students read a text, usually of their choosing. Literacy skills improve when students choose the books they can and want to read. Over time, students will read and respond to a variety of texts independently. I will guide text selection, confer with individual students, and facilitate a shared discussion to extend students' understanding and enjoyment.
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> **Literature Circles** – A student-led group of readers discusses various aspects of a text or a set of related texts and sometimes works on projects to extend and share learning. Students will be shown methods for analyzing and discussing texts with one another to create shared meanings that are more refined and complex than they would discover on their own. The teacher will monitor and support the groups as needed.

Comprehension strategies will be emphasized during readers' workshop. Strategies that will be taught include:

- Making connections between prior knowledge and the text
- Questioning
- Visualizing
- Drawing inference
- Determining important ideas or themes
- Synthesizing information
- Researching a topic of interest
- Noticing creative language

These strategies will be taught through teacher modeling, guided practice, independent practice, and various reading situations. Regular strategy practice, combined with the teacher and peer response, is central to reading improvement.

Readers' Workshop will also focus on the following:

- Describe character development.
- Understand that the plot is developed through a sequence of events.
- Identify the events in a sequence that lead to the resolution of the conflict.
- Distinguish between fact and fiction.
- Form opinions and draw conclusions from the text.
- Identify cause and effect relationships.
- Identify, compare, and contrast relationships.

Writers' Workshop

Mini-lesson – A short lesson on some aspect of writing, such as the writing process, parts of speech, sentence structure, or paragraph writing.

Independent Writing – Students work individually and silently on their writing. Students may write or sketch in their writers' notebook. At other times, they may work on drafting, revising, editing, or publishing a writing project. The students will write for a variety of purposes, including narrative and expository writing. I will confer with individual students to support and address their needs.

Writing Conferences – The teacher works with individual students or small groups of students and teaches the craft, strategies, and skills those writers need at that particular time to complete a written project or paper.

Investigations – Students will explore a piece of literature or content area topic in depth, using writing, reading, and a variety of media resources, including technology. The investigation will often culminate in an oral presentation, performance, or display.

Language, Word, and Vocabulary Study – This block of instruction varies based on student needs. The focus will be on the students' language and word study knowledge and skills. We will build vocabulary and learn the rules and principles of some phonics and spelling. We will focus on parts of speech and the various parts of a sentence.

Reading, writing, and communication goals:

- Use effective oral communication skills in a variety of settings.
- Maintain eye contact with listeners.
- Use appropriate facial expressions to support or dramatize verbal message.
- Use visual aids to support presentations.
- Use context to infer the correct meaning of unfamiliar words.
- Use punctuation correctly.
- Vary sentence structure.
- Use knowledge of root words, prefixes, and suffixes.
- Identify parts of speech.
- Read a variety of literary forms, including fiction, nonfiction, and poetry.
- Describe character and plot development, and explain how conflicts are resolved.
- Write effective narratives and explanations.
- Use information resources to research a topic.
- Demonstrate comprehension of a variety of literary forms by using text organizers, such as type, headings, and graphics, to predict and categorize information in informational texts.
- Write for a variety of purposes to describe, to inform, to entertain, and to explain.

Mathematics

The Blue Room will be using a math curriculum entitled *Prentice Hall Mathematics Course 1*. It covers a combination of rational numbers (including fraction arithmetic), patterns, geometry, and integers in preparation for solving one- and two-step equations and inequalities. Guided problem-solving strategies throughout the text provide students with the tools they need to be effective and independent learners. An emphasis on fractions solidifies student understanding of rational number operations preparing them to apply these skills to algebraic equations. Activity Labs throughout the text provide hands-on, minds-on experiences reaching all types of learners. It is a problem-solving approach, based on everyday situations, which develops critical thinking.

In Course 1 students will:

- Reach a mastery of all decimal and fraction operations. Students will work with percentages and develop estimation skills. Concepts of scale and ratio are introduced.
- Use variables in equations and patterns. Models are introduced for percentages, proportions, integers, and properties of equality.
- Use grids, nets, and block diagrams to build concepts of area and volume. Students will explore symmetry and transformations. The coordinate plane is introduced.

- Choose units, convert units, and estimate measures within the customary and metric systems.
- The students develop and use formulas related to polygons and also explore surface area and volume.
- Master measures of central tendency, simple line graphs, bar graphs, and probabilities. Students will make line plots, circle graphs, and stem-and-leaf plots.
- Learn specific problem-solving strategies and apply them to a variety of problems. Students will practice and apply these strategies through guided problem-solving.
- Justify answers by showing the steps they took to solve problems or writing about mathematics. Many exercises will ask students to justify their work, explain a process, or draw a conclusion.

Science

The purpose of science education is to help children acquire the skills necessary to investigate more thoroughly and systematically. Students will be expected to develop questions, formulate simple hypotheses, make predictions, design and implement an experiment, gather and analyze data, make inferences, and draw conclusions. They will use the metric system with greater precision. Students will also participate in the school's annual science fair.

Focused science topics for the Blue Room this year include, but are not limited to:

- Biomes
- Cells
- Taxonomy (animal kingdoms)
- The Building Blocks of Matter/Scientific Investigation Methods
- Electricity and Magnetism/Scientific Investigation Methods
- Human Body
- Rocks, Minerals, and Tectonic Plates
- Natural Disasters
- Solar System (if time allows)
- Oceans (if time allows)

Social Studies

Social studies is more than a collection of facts for students to memorize. It is an understanding of how people, places, and events came about – an understanding of how people relate and respond to each other's needs and desires. It develops respect for different viewpoints and cultural beliefs.

Focused social studies topics for the Blue Room this year include, but are not limited to:

- Geography
- 50 States and Capitals
- US Government and the Election Process

- Studies of Select African Cultures and Africa's Connection to America
- Lewis and Clark
- Westward Expansion (Pioneers) and the Industrial Revolution
- The Trail of Tears
- Slavery
- Civil War
- Anthropology/International Studies (if time allows)

Current events will be a component of social studies, science, and language arts. Students will respond to a news or magazine article on a tri-weekly basis. History is ongoing.

Computer Technology

Computer skills are an essential component of every student's education. This year the students will continue to develop their keyboarding skills. They will learn to process, store, retrieve, and transmit electronic information. They will use electronic encyclopedias, almanacs, and websites for researching information. By the end of the year, they will present projects using word processors, presentations, and spreadsheets. Students will also begin using Google Classroom, a cooperative learning site they will continue to use throughout middle school and high school.

In Blue Room we use a variety of technology resources including, but not limited to:

- Google Classroom
- Google Drive
- Jupiter Ed. (I use this as a personal gradebook)
- Discovery Education
- Google Search Engine (for research)
- YouTube (for educational videos)
- Online News Sites (for current events)

If I use additional online resources, parents will be notified through the weekly newsletter. We encourage our students to use technology safely and responsibly as outlined in our technology use policy.

Community Action

The students will engage in some community action. Parents are encouraged to assist with this activity by providing ideas or activities through which students could give back to their community.

Assessment

The students will be assessed using a variety of formal and informal assessments. Documentation of the student's learning will be kept on file and shared during parent-teacher conferences, which are held three times a year.

- A Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI) assessment will be given twice during the year, once at the beginning of the year and once at the end. Students will also be informally assessed through literature circles and comprehension activities. They will be formally assessed through reading comprehension questions across the curriculum.
- Throughout the writing process, students will use personal writing samples for revision and peer/self/teacher editing. There will be vocabulary and personalized spelling quizzes. The spelling words will be selected from words students have misspelled in their own writing.
- The students will be formally assessed using publisher-created materials in mathematics. They will also be given daily practice through homework problems and homework corrections.
- In science and social studies, students will be assessed through projects, research papers, observation, discussions, activities, rubric evaluations, and tests or quizzes.