

Fifth-Grade Curriculum

2016-17

"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 investigation. The goal of the Blue Room is to not only 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 connected, and therefore are an integral part of the Blue Room curriculum. We will read an assortment of literary works with an emphasis on classics and contemporary works by a variety of authors. Much of our reading material will relate to math, 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 good "pieces." The students will learn to use various resources to gather information. The students will be exposed to a variety of poets and poetry and have opportunities to write the same. Students will write across the curriculum. There will be plenty of writing opportunities in every subject area. The students will use the writing method of pre-writing, drafting, revising for content, 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 identifying genres or plot.

Independent Reading - in which students read a text, usually of their own choosing. 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.

Guided Reading - in which a small group of students with similar reading strategies work with the teacher to learn more about reading. I will select a text at an appropriate level, introduce it, and provide supportive teaching that helps the group understand what reading is and how it works.

Literature Circles - in which a 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 how to analyze and discuss texts with one another in order to create shared meanings that are more refined and complex than they would discover on their own.

As our readers' workshop develops, students will work in different areas. Some may do independent reading, usually - but not always - of their choice. Reading skills improve when students choose the books they can and want to read.

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
- Synthesizing information

These strategies will be taught through teacher modeling, guided practice, independent practice, and real reading situations. Regular strategy practice, combined with teacher and peer response, is central to reading improvement. Students will read familiar text with fluency and expression.

Readers' Workshop will also focus on the following:

- Describe character development
- Understand that plot is developed through a sequence of events
- Identify the events in sequence that lead to resolution of the conflict
- Use text organizers to predict and categorize information
- 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 parts of speech, sentence structure, or paragraph writing.

Independent Writing - in which students work individually and silently on their own writing. Students may write or sketch in their writer's 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.

Guided Writing - in which the teacher pulls together temporary groups of student writers and teaches the craft, strategies, and skills those writers need at that particular time. Group work may focus on developing specific writing skills, on using writing as a tool for inquiry, on learning to write in different genres, and/or on using technology to publish writing.

Investigations - in which 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 from day to day. 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 and writing 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 is a combination of rational numbers, patterns, geometry, and integers in preparation for 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, that develops critical thinking.

In Course 1 students will:

- Reach a mastery of all decimal and fraction operations. Students will work with percents and develop estimation skills. Concepts of scale and ratio are introduced.
- Use variables in equations and patterns. Models are introduced for percents, 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 strategies and apply them to a variety of problems. Students will practice and apply these strategies through guided problem solving.
- Write 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, 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 annual science fair.

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

- Scientific Investigations
- Biomes
- Cells
- Taxonomy (Kingdoms)
- Human Body
- The Building Blocks of Matter
- 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 children 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
- Africa's Connection to America
- US Government and the Election Process
- Lewis and Clark
- Pioneers
- Westward Expansion and the Industrial Revolution
- Slavery
- Civil War
- Anthropology/International Studies (if time allows)

Current events will be a component of social studies. Students will respond to a current event on a bi-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 catalogs. By the end of the year, they will use word processing skills to create one- to two-page documents with integrated graphics. They will learn how to prepare presentations using Microsoft PowerPoint. The students will also have an introduction to Microsoft Excel. Students will learn how to use digital cameras. They will create a digital portfolio of their activities and accomplishments in the Blue Room.

Community Action

The students will engage in some type of community action. Parents are encouraged to assist with this activity, by providing ideas or activities in 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 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.