

# The American School in London

## Grade 4: Semester 2 Curriculum Guide

By the end of the second reporting period, these are the ideas, concepts, and skills your child will have learned. We acknowledge that all children learn at different paces, and that it takes the students different lengths of time to master skills and concepts.

### Approaches to Learning

We expect students in Grade 4 to accept responsibility for their own actions. We value cooperation and attentive listening to directions from the teacher and the ideas of other classmates. The development of a consistently organized approach to work is fostered throughout the year. We expect work of a consistent quality that reflects thoughtful practice with a focus on the attainment of self-reflective skills.

### Reading

Students participate in a multi-genre Reader's Workshop. They practice a variety of reading strategies to deepen their comprehension. These include: identifying main idea and supporting details in nonfiction, summarizing, making connections, inferring, predicting, formulating questions and analyzing character. They should be able to select just-right books independently and read for 30 to 45 minutes. Students learn to become metacognitive readers and to record and discuss their thoughts about texts. At the end of Grade 4, students meeting expectations are reading books at a Fountas and Pinnell level of S/T.

### Writing

Using the Writer's Workshop model, students are led through a process of planning, drafting, revising, editing, publishing, and sharing their work. Whole class mini-lessons teach students specific writing strategies in two genres: essay and information writing. Students consider their audience and think of the purpose of their writing. During our essay-writing unit, students focus on stating a claim and supporting it with evidence. Our information-writing unit gives students the opportunity to write about a topic they have researched, linked to our Social Studies Power unit. Students learn to teach others by sharing main ideas in an organized way, developing details to support their ideas. They learn to provide evidence and to cite sources. Student/teacher writing conferences provide an opportunity for individualized instruction based on the students' needs.

### Speaking and Listening

Grade 4 students practice speaking and listening across disciplines to reinforce, build upon and share their learning. Students use eye contact and respond appropriately throughout a discussion. They are expected to be able to follow multi-step instructions independently. Opportunities to speak in small and large groups help students gain confidence as speakers. They share their ideas and experiences in an organized fashion while using appropriate body language and gestures.

## Math

In math, Grade 4 students develop efficient strategies to tackle complex problems. They work to explain their mathematical thinking fully and clearly. The curriculum is aligned to the Common Core State Standards, and we emphasize problem solving and require students to use multiple approaches, have an open mind, and think flexibly. In Semester 2, students learn various methods for solving multi-digit multiplication and division problems, including building arrays and using equations. Students also work with the concept of factors to differentiate between prime and composite numbers. Students engage in hands-on experiences with manipulatives to deepen their understanding of equivalent fractions and develop models to represent and solve fraction addition and subtraction problems. They extend this thinking to apply these skills to the concept of multiplying fractions by whole numbers. In these fraction units, students work with denominators of 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12 and 100. Students are introduced to the concept of decimals to the tenths and the hundredths.

## Social Studies

In social studies, students continue to focus on how power, perspective and conflict shape the past and present. Seeing the past through the lens of power will help students understand inequalities today. Students will use primary and secondary sources to examine inequalities in power, specifically slavery in ancient times, the Atlantic Slave Trade and Underground Railroad. The end of the year focuses on how to empower groups.

## Science

Grade 4 students develop their science knowledge and understanding through two units: a study of variation and adaptation of organisms and an investigation into the nature of hydrogels. Throughout, patterns such as cause and effect relationships are identified. Differences between inherited and acquired characteristics are distinguished, and students learn about the important role of the genetic code. In their practices, students make detailed observations and ask questions to design their own investigation using fair tests with superabsorbent polymers. They also collect and analyze data on the water bird population in Regents Park. In both units, students demonstrate their scientific communication by constructing explanations of relationships using evidence.

## Art

This semester, Grade 4 students use a variety of materials to continue developing their appreciation of 3D art and the creation of the realistic drawing. Students also continue to use paint as they develop observational techniques to make compositions appear to be 3D. Students analyze components in visual imagery that convey messages and organize a 'pop up' gallery as they respond to different interpretations of the same object. They compare and contrast the purposes of art galleries and other venues, as well as the types of personal experiences they bring to them as artists.

## Music

This semester Grade 4 students work on developing their performance skills by preparing and presenting a musical. Students perform a number of songs and dances as well as learning some basic acting skills with the main objective being to connect with their audience. Students continue to develop their singing skills as the semester progresses along with their understanding of the basic elements of music. With the introduction of hand chimes last semester, the students will continue to develop their ringing technique while reading from a large scale score. Students are also introduced to the ukulele, learning a number of chords and strumming patterns and simple songs. As well as playing together as a class ensemble, students work in small groups and with partners on many activities including creating their own short composition.

## PE

Grade 4 students continue to work together in more complex cooperative games to deepen their understanding of the “Big C’s” of sport: cooperation, care, compromise, challenge, celebration and commitment. Students participate in activities that build on more mature locomotor and manipulative skills in activities such as invasion games and striking and fielding games, all integrated within modified game situations. This helps develop the students’ understanding of movement concepts, principles, strategies and tactics. Students self-assess and peer-assess to improve their skills and play games demonstrating good sportsmanship, fair play and self-discipline. Students also continue to develop their dance skills, learning to replicate, adapt, link and create sequential movement skills, as well developing an understanding of fitness and improving personal performances in run, jump and throw activities. They have a second unit of aquatics where they will play games such as water polo and learn about getting fit by building up to participate in the ASL “Aquathon” - a fun race completed as an individual or a team involving an 800m run and a 300m swim.

## Spanish

This semester, Grade 4 students continue to use their speaking and listening skills in a rehearsed way: working with partners at the different learning centers around the classroom, recording videos and posting them on Freshgrade. Each center engages the students with a different language task, emphasizing the use of the oral language and challenging their presentational and interpersonal speaking skills. Students will also engage in a variety of activities covering cultural aspects of the target language, spelling, pronunciation, reading, and writing for beginners.