

Commack Public Schools



Curriculum Guide *for* *Fourth Grade Families*

The Commack School District Mission Statement

*Within the context of a caring community of learners,
our primary mission is to provide an exemplary learning experience
that will allow each child to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, attitudes,
and values to become a successful, contributing member within our school*

2019-2020

What your child will be taught in Fourth Grade

This guide provides parents and guardians with an overview of the curriculum for fourth grade and provides a snapshot of the concepts and skills children will be taught in English Language Arts, social studies, mathematics, science, technology, library, art, music, physical education, health, and character education. The curriculum of the Commack Public Schools follows the guidelines set forth by the New York State Department of Education (NYSED) and creates clear expectations for what your child should know and be able to do in these academic areas. Elementary teachers recognize that children develop at different rates socially, emotionally and academically. Our program is designed to meet the needs of all learners. Knowing what your child is learning strengthens the partnership between you and your child's teachers.

English Language Arts

The program is based on the foundation that children learn through rich, meaningful and developmentally appropriate experiences with print. Our classrooms are rich with literature that provides children with the opportunity to expand reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

Reading

- Use pre-reading and word recognition strategies effectively
- Apply multiple strategies for fluency, expression, and comprehension
- Engage in independent self selected reading
- Read for specific information
- Compare, contrast, draw conclusion, and summarize from multiple texts
- Relate literary works to others, to self and to the world
- Demonstrate an awareness of literature from different cultures, genres, and historic periods
- Identify story elements of setting, character, problem, solution, theme, and resolution
- Analyze questions
- Differentiate fact and opinion
- Read to analyze and evaluate information, ideas, and experiences using critical thinking skills
- Increase reading vocabulary



Writing

- Begin to develop a writer's voice
- Spell frequently used words correctly
- Develop an idea within a text
- Continue to use the writing process
- Use capitalization and punctuation correctly
- Demonstrate appropriate use and knowledge of parts of speech
- Improve ability to self-edit and to edit the works of others
- Write sentences in logical order and uses paragraphs to develop ideas
- Use dialogue, interesting language, and strong verbs with guidance
- Write legibly and uses word processing skills
- Write in a variety of formats using details to explain and clarify
- Write personal responses to literature
- Write about the meaning of a literary work
- Write to inform and to express a personal opinion
- Write for social communication



Listening/Speaking

- Focus attention for extended periods of time
- Listen critically to acquire information
- Select and use strategies for note-taking, organizing and categorizing information
- Follow multi-step directions
- Listen to identify, analyze and evaluate key story elements
- Use good speaking criteria: effective delivery, diction, grammar, and poise
- Present opinions using facts and details
- Use critical thinking to develop relevant and extended responses
- Speak to promote social interaction



Social Studies

Geographic

- Recognize geographic features of Long Island and New York State in relationship to other areas
- Examine the significance of geography and climate on the history of Long Island and New York
- Interpret political, physical, and thematic maps

Political

- Explore concept of government from Native American foundations through The Constitution
- Explore the structure and function of state, county, and local government
- Explore the roles of citizenship in school, home, and community

Social

- Identify and describe cultural similarities and differences that have shaped our community, region, and state
- Investigate accomplishments and contributions of Native Americans, Dutch, and English colonists, African Americans and the immigrants of the 19th and 20th Century

Economic

- Develop an awareness of how people meet the basic needs of shelter, food, and clothing
- Trace changes over time with advances in technology

Historical Events

- Connect local and New York State history to United States history by focusing on: Native Americans in New York State, the European Encounter, the Colonial and Revolutionary Periods, the new nation, and the Industrial Revolution

Mathematics

The program is structured on the principle that children are able to apply and adapt acquired mathematical ideas to new situations when they develop conceptual understanding. Conceptual understanding is understanding the 'why' in mathematics. Allowing children time to progress with concrete materials, followed by visual representations, will develop a strong number sense and a conceptual understanding.

Operations and Algebraic Thinking

- Use the four operations with whole numbers to solve problems
- Gain familiarity with factors and multiples
- Generate and analyze patterns



Number and Operations in Base Ten

- Generalize place value understanding for multi-digit whole numbers
- Use place value understanding and properties of operations to perform multi-digit arithmetic

Number and Operations of Fractions

- Extend understanding fraction equivalence and ordering
- Build fractions from unit fractions by applying and extending previous understandings of operations on whole numbers.
- Understand decimal notation for fractions, and compare decimal fractions

Measurement and Data

- Solve problems involving measurement and conversion of measurements from a larger unit to a smaller unit
- Represent and interpret data
- Geometric measurement: understand concepts of angle and measure angles using a protractor

Geometry

- Draw and identify lines and angles, and classify shapes by properties of their lines and angles

Science

Inquiry

- Demonstrate safety in science
- Understand the scientific method
- Identify the variable
- Communicate concepts through written, verbal, and constructed models using scientific vocabulary



Life Science

- Interpret and/or illustrate the energy flow in a food chain, energy pyramid, or food web
- Examine different eco-systems
- Understand ways to reduce, reuse, and recycle
- Understand the need to help protect the environment
- Construct an argument that plants and animals have internal and external structures that function to support survival, growth, behavior, and reproduction
- Model how animals receive different types of information through their senses, process the information in their brain, and respond in different ways

Physical Science

- Investigate different forms of energy
- Understand the difference between kinetic & potential energy
- Engineer a design for a roller coaster and solar oven

Technology

- Continue to become more proficient in skills previously taught
- Begin to use intermediate word processing software
- Use tutorial keyboard software
- Interact with software that promotes higher level thinking skills
- Use electronic research tools

Library

- Become more proficient in skills previously taught
- Use the on-line Destiny card catalog system
- Understand the Dewey Decimal System
- Continue to use print and online encyclopedias and reference material including dictionaries, thesaurus, almanacs, and atlases
- Is familiar with the Caldecott and Newberry Awards
- Continue to appreciate literature through book-talks and read-alouds

Art

Art provides children with opportunities to further creative expression and build language. Children will build self esteem through positive art experiences.

- Explore new and traditional color theories
- Acquire skills with more advanced and complex tools
- Develop an understanding of relative concepts of art: sculpture (transparent, translucent, and opaque)
- Broaden knowledge of artists
- Enjoy art as it is integrated into subject areas
- Learn to critique peer work



Music

Music also provides children with opportunities for creative expression and movement.

- Learn that melodies may have more than one home tone
- Learn that rhythm may have a wide variety of patterns and meters
- Learn that harmony may be organized in a variety of ways
- Learn that forms of music may be outlined and identified historically
- Learn about contemporary music
- Learn that instruments have different sounds and timbres



Physical Education

Physical Education provides children with the opportunity to learn the importance of exercise and good sportsmanship.

- Demonstrate knowledge of safety and following rules
- Continue to learn to work cooperatively and develop the concept of fair play
- Develop motor skills and movement concepts
- Participate in folk and square dancing
- Develop listening skills
- Manipulate ropes, hoops, balls, and other equipment
- Engage in simple games and relays
- Develop specific sport skills such as catching, dribbling, and passing
- Participate in advanced skills in tumbling and apparatus



Health and Character Education

Children will learn to make decisions regarding healthy behaviors.

- Continue to learn about nutrition, healthy life choices, and the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse
- Continue to learn about safety, first aid, and cleanliness
- Continue to demonstrate an understanding of self and acceptance of self and others
- Continue to learn to demonstrate the importance of character: courtesy, honesty, pride, responsibility, accountability, compassion, tolerance, endurance, and respect



Movement in the Arts

Movement in the Arts provides extra time for children during their school day to positively harness their energy, creates a healthy space to tap into their mindfulness, and aides in the success of their progress both in and out of their learning environment.

- Develop healthy strategies to promote overall success using physical, musical, and artistic outlets
- Demonstrates cooperative learning while promoting good sportsmanship and positive social behavior
- Establishes confidence while learning the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle
- Develops lifelong tools utilizing mindfulness to combat anxiety and stress
- Introduces basic movements, cooperative games, fitness, dance, drumming and yoga
- Develops the student's ability to control their body movements and minds

Guidelines for Homework Best Practice: Commack UFSD

Fourth Grade -Specific Guidelines

The following Guidelines for Homework Best Practices have been designed by Commack educators. Classroom teachers make important instructional decisions every day. These decisions are based on the specific needs of each child and can result in individualized differentiated homework assignments that may vary from, but continue to reflect, the guidelines as necessary and appropriate.

Homework Defined

Any assignment, written or otherwise, to be completed outside of the classroom.

Purpose and Benefits of Homework

The purpose of homework is the reinforcement, extension, and/or application of content and skills previously taught in school.

The Commack School District recognizes that homework may provide further benefits to students and their families. These may include the following:

- Providing families with insight regarding each child's learning;
- Developing responsibility and accountability;
- Fostering independent learning;
- Offering opportunities for confidence building; and
- Strengthening executive functioning skills (time management)

Important Notes Regarding Fourth Grade Homework

- As the year progresses, the children grow and mature. They develop more skills and gain stamina. Therefore, it is appropriate that homework may look differently in June than it does in September. Homework may change in frequency and complexity.
- Other than specifically-designed, long-term assignments, homework is intended to be completed on a daily basis and reviewed in a timely manner.
- Although children all work at different paces, fourth grade homework is generally intended to add approximately forty-five minutes of academic reinforcement outside the classroom. This means that on nights when homework is assigned, fourth graders may spend approximately forty-five minutes on daily homework assignments. This is inclusive of written assignments, activities, and/or reading. Homework may or may not be assigned every night.
- Parents are encouraged to contact the teacher (via email, in the agenda planner, or write on the assignment itself) directly if the homework assignment is too challenging, time consuming and/or should they have any questions regarding homework assignment.

What Does Homework Look Like for a Fourth Grade Student In Commack?

- Homework for fourth grade reinforces the classroom learning. Homework is a developmentally-appropriate application and extension of the concepts and skills taught in the classroom. Clear directions and well-defined expectations are provided so students have the ability to complete assignments independently or with minimal assistance. Homework will be reviewed in a timely manner.
- Homework takes a variety of forms and structures. Typical daily assignments for a fourth grade student in Commack may include, but are not limited to, the following:

Math

- Worksheets (teacher-created, publisher-provided worksheets, review sheets);
- Workbook/textbook pages (reteach, extra practice, enrichment);
- Math journal;
- Hands-on activities;
- Review activities (studying math facts, studying for tests, etc.); and
- Computer games, such as XtraMath.com, ThinkCentral.com.

English Language Arts (ELA)

- Spelling/Vocabulary (workbook pages, teacher created materials, choice boards and studying for tests);
- Grammar (teacher-created worksheets, publisher provided worksheets, studying for tests);
- Reading (comprehension activities, reading independently with or without an extension activity); and
- Writing (brainstorming, editing and revision activities).

Science

- Vocabulary activities;
- Lab extension;
- Review sheets; and
- Studying for tests.

Social Studies

- Vocabulary activities;
- Pre-read and read content area materials;
- Skill building activities- reading maps, extension of ELA skills;
- Workbook pages;
- Worksheets (teacher created, publisher provided, document-based questions);
- Review sheets; and
- Studying for tests.

Long-Term Projects

Long-term projects are defined as an activity assigned and due back at a certain date in the future rather than the next day. Such assignments will likely require additional adult supervision and support. Such assignments should include a clearly-stated purpose and expectations for completion.

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