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Lower School Curriculum

The foundation of the Princeton Academy language arts curriculum is the belief that language arts are integral to the learning process of any subject at any level. Boys at Princeton Academy have ample opportunity and time to read and write independently, as well as to experience excellent modeling of reading and writing. The instruction is designed to build on skills and knowledge gained in the preceding grades, in a way both developmentally appropriate and progressively challenging. Connections to science and social studies units are frequent. The wide developmental variation in boys is met through the use of leveled text in guided reading and reading workshop, with instruction occurring in whole and small groups as well as individually. As reading is an interaction between the text and the reader, there is a focus on comprehension skills in each grade. Comprehension skills introduced include: metacognition, schema, inferring, questioning, determining importance, visualizing and synthesizing. The **Junior Great Books** program assists in reinforcing high-level comprehension skills. Writing workshop introduces boys to process writing, which mirrors how real writers write. Authentic writing for a variety of purposes and audiences throughout the curriculum strengthens the role of writing as a communication tool. Grammar and mechanics are introduced when developmentally appropriate. **Word Journeys** and **Words Their Way** are developmental spelling and phonics programs in which the underlying philosophy is that the understanding of the printed word occurs in clear stages. Instruction is designed to meet the specific needs of each boy. **Handwriting Without Tears** meets the fine motor needs of boys through its clear, simple letter formation and interactive learning style.

Everyday Math emphasizes a balance between learning concepts, skills and problem solving. In each grade level content is divided into six strands: number and numeration, operations and computation, data and chance, measurement, geometry and patterns, functions, and algebra. Through **FOSS** inquiry-based science, the boys develop skills of observation, documentation, data collection, and data analysis. Research skills are developed as students learn to identify appropriate resources and evaluate the validity of information. Scientific tools and their appropriate function are introduced. Our social studies curriculum has been designed by our teachers to help the boys develop a broad view of the world, beginning locally and moving outward to encompass the world as a global village. They explore civics, history, culture, geography, environment, economics, communication, and media. Curriculum is designed to teach diversity, tolerance, and respect for all people, as well as responsibility to family, community, country, world and environment.

Curriculum connections to science and social studies units that are studied in the regular classroom assist in developing content knowledge through varied means. Students are introduced to Spanish beginning in Junior Kindergarten, and by third grade are attending classes four days a week for 30 minutes. Instruction occurs through games, songs and literature, with a focus on conversational skills. Students are gradually introduced to the printed word and in third grade begin to read and write in Spanish. Additionally, all Princeton Academy students attend religion, music, art and physical education for two periods a week.

Our curriculum matrix (on the following pages) focuses on the main features that distinguish each grade.

	Reading	Writing	Word Study
Junior Kindergarten	Literature includes: Nursery Rhymes and Folktales Understanding concepts of print Retelling stories Vocabulary development Development of listening skills.	Illustrate and dictate simple stories Recognize, spell and write name Proper pencil grip Letter formation	Most boys are either <i>Emergent spellers:</i> (Phonemic awareness, rhyme, same/different.) OR <i>Letter name spellers</i> (initial and final consonants; short vowel)
Kindergarten	Literature includes: Nursery Rhymes and Fairy Tales Concepts of print Phonemic awareness Retelling stories Features of fiction/non fiction Sight word recognition. Comprehension skills	Types of writing: Personal narratives, fiction, non-fiction and poetry Illustrate and write simple stories Share writing with an audience Capitals at the beginning of sentences and names Periods and question marks Write first and last name	Most boys are either: <i>Emergent spellers</i> (Phonemic awareness, rhyme, same/different.) OR <i>Letter name spellers</i> (initial and final consonants; blends; digraphs; short vowels)
First Grade	Literature includes: classics and drama Word attack strategies Reading fluency Sight words Comprehension skills	Types of writing: Personal narratives, poetry fiction, and letter writing. Writing asking and telling sentences Capitals Exclamation marks Nouns and verbs Commas in a series	Most boys are either: <i>Letter Name Spellers</i> (initial and final consonants, blends, digraphs, short vowels, and affricates) OR <i>Within Word Spellers</i> (silent-e, r-controlled vowels, long vowels)
Second Grade	Literature includes: Chinese and African Folktales, poetry, Black history, nonfiction Story elements Decoding Fluency skills. Comprehension skills	Types of writing: personal narratives, folktales, letters, poetry, nonfiction, and persuasive pieces Focus: organization, narrowing a topic, adding details, and varying sentences Capitals for dates and titles Nouns, pronouns and verbs Commas in dates and letters Forming plurals Subject and predicate agreement Linking verbs Apostrophes in contractions	Most boys are either: Letter Name spellers (blends and digraphs, short vowels, and affricates) OR <i>Within Word Pattern</i> spellers (long vowels, r controlled vowels, complex consonants, abstract vowels.)
Third Grade	Literature includes: Poetry, fiction, folktales, nonfiction Setting Plot Theme Character analysis Retelling stories in sequential order Main idea Introduction of book clubs to allow boys to lead discussions in small groups.	Types of Writing: expository, narrative, persuasive, poetry, research reports Four types of sentences: declarative, interrogative, exclamatory & imperative Quotation marks in uninterrupted & interrupted quotes Adjectives Possessives	Most boys are either: <i>Within Word Pattern</i> spellers (long vowels, complex consonants, abstract vowels) OR <i>Syllable Juncture</i> spellers (doubling or dropping when adding endings, long vowels and r-controlled vowels in stressed & unstressed syllables)
Fourth Grade	Literature includes: biographies & poetry Book clubs Themes Main idea Character analysis Higher level comprehension skills, such as making inferences and drawing conclusions are emphasized	Types of writing: expository, narrative, persuasive Research skills: note taking & outlining Paragraph construction Proper nouns, verbs, adjectives & adverbs Capitals in place names and abbrev. Complete sentences Compound sentences Coordinating conjunctions with comma	Most boys are either: <i>Syllable Juncture</i> spellers (long vowels and r controlled vowels in stressed & unstressed syllables) OR <i>Derivational Constancy</i> spellers (silent and sounded consonants, consonant changes, vowel changes, suffixes and prefixes)

	Math	Science	Social Studies	Spanish
Junior Kindergarten	Numerals 1-10 Counting objects to 10 One to one correspondence Sorting & patterns Sizes & two dimensional shapes More/less/same Money and time	Insects Plants Weather Five senses Animal habitats	All About Me My Family School Community Holidays Our Country and flag	Introduction to basic vocabulary including colors and parts of the body Following simple directions Greetings, name, and age
Kindergarten	Counting to 100 Skip counting by 2's, 5's, 10's Estimation Problem solving Identify coins Introduction to standard measurement Three dimensional figures Time to the hour	Trees and wood Dinosaurs Life cycle of chicks and ducks	Family, Friends and School Maps Australia Family Holiday Traditions	Introduction to basic vocabulary: colors, numbers, clothing and parts of the body; following simple directions; greetings, name, and age.
First Grade	Place value through 1000 Addition/subtraction to 20 Commutative additive properties Telling time to quarter hour Making graphs and tables	Solids and liquids Insects	Components of a Community Modern and Ancient Egypt Map reading & making	Basic questions and expressions; word identification; culturally authentic songs, games and stories.
Second Grade	Recall of Addition/subtraction facts to 20 Algorithms Time to the minute Graphing & Estimating Money & measurement Geometry & fractions Place value through ten thousand Arrays used for multipl. / division	Weather Balance and motion Plants	Africa Wampanoags and the First Thanksgiving China Antarctica Ocean habitats Geography Current events	Listening and responding to basic questions and commands Word identification Culturally authentic songs Games and stories from Latin America and the Caribbean
Third Grade	Addition/subtraction of multi-digit numbers and 3 or more addends Perimeter, area and diameter Multiplication/division Fact families Place value to millions Introduction of decimals Introduction of segments, lines and rays Fractions Multi digit multiplication Gathering and using data	Rocks and Minerals Physics of Sound Habitats Rain forest Life cycle	United States Geography Native Americans Middle Ages Rain forest Brazil	Introduction to reading and writing previously learned vocabulary. Pablo y sus Amigos Workbook C
Fourth Grade	Line segments Rays & angles Finding the median Add/subtract multi-digit numbers Multiplication facts Using parentheses Place value to trillions Decimals to thousandths Coordinate grids Equivalent fractions Percentages Finding area and volume Solving rate problems	Water Shipbuilding Electricity & Magnetism Circuit building Telegraph Making Inventions of Edison and Franklin Invention Convention Human body study	Explorers of the World Colonial Times Revolutionary War Writing the Constitution NJ civics & govt. Federal civics & govt. Thomas Edison Economics	Reading and writing sentences. Pablo y sus Amigos Workbook D

	Religion	Art	Music	PE
Junior Kindergarten	<p>God loves each of us God answers prayers Jesus teaches with stories Showing care to others Thanking God and others Making good choices Liturgical seasons.</p> <p>Gospel Weekly: Seed</p>	<p>Fine motor skills Drawing & painting Print making Sculpture & assemblage Proper use of various tools, paper and clay</p> <p>Artist study: Edward Hicks, Virginia Lee Burton</p>	<p>Speaking and singing voice Beat High and low Fast and slow Timbre Orff instruments Orchestral instruments</p>	<p>Loco-motor and gross motor movements Body and spatial awareness Basic hand-eye coordination Cooperative play Fitness games</p>
Kindergarten	<p>Everyone is a child of God Jesus heals Sharing loving actions Liturgical seasons Living together peacefully Caring for creation Jesus forgives Gathering in prayer</p> <p>Gospel Weekly: Seed</p>	<p>Fine motor skills Drawing Print making & painting Sculpture & assemblage Proper use of various tools, papers and clay Elements of art are introduced</p> <p>Artist Study: Andy Warhol, Beatrix Potter</p>	<p>Speaking and singing voice Beat High and low Fast/slow Timbre Orff instruments Orchestral instruments Choir ensemble singing</p>	<p>Loco-motor and gross motor movements Body & spatial awareness Basic hand-eye coordination Cooperative play Fitness games</p>
First Grade	<p>God gives us talents to share Caring for creation Forgiveness Being peacemakers Prayers of thanksgiving Jesus' call to serve others Liturgical seasons</p> <p>Gospel Weekly: Promise</p>	<p>Drawing & Painting Print making Sculpture & assemblage Proper use of various tools, papers and clay Elements of art</p> <p>Artist Study: Vincent VanGogh, Bill Peet</p>	<p>Reading and notating music Pitch recognition Tone and rhythm Interpreting songs using instruments, voice and movement Choir ensemble singing</p> <p>Composer focus: Beethoven</p>	<p>Gross motor skills Hand/eye coord. Developmentally appropriate games Physical skills Interpersonal skills Build confidence and a sense of fitness</p>
Second Grade	<p><i>Non Catholic students:</i> The Christian community Spread the Good News Repent & receive forgiveness The Liturgical Calendar Gospel Weekly: Good News</p> <p><i>Catholic students:</i> Sacramental preparation The Trinity Reconciliation Parts of the Mass</p>	<p>Drawing & painting Print making Sculpture & assemblage Proper use of various tools, papers and clay Elements of art</p> <p>Artist Study: Georges Seurat, James Abbott McNeal, Ernest H. Shepard</p>	<p>Reading and notating music Pitch recognition Tone and rhythm Interpreting songs Choir ensemble singing, including songs in a foreign language</p> <p>Composer focus: Bach</p>	<p>Gross motor skills Hand/eye coord. Developmentally appropriate games Physical skills Interpersonal skills Build confidence and a sense of fitness</p>
Third Grade	<p>The Ten Commandments God is merciful Prayers of petition Care of creation Making good choices Learning about Jesus through scripture Liturgical seasons</p> <p>Gospel Weekly- Good News</p>	<p>Drawing & painting Print making Sculpture & assemblage Proper use of various tools, papers and clay Elements of art</p> <p>Artist study: Henri Rousseau, Leonardo daVinci; Eric Carle</p>	<p>Intermediate reading & notating Pitch recognition Tone and rhythm Interpreting songs Ensemble singing of multipart rounds, partner songs, ostinati and simple harmony</p> <p>Composer focus: Strauss After school violin (optional)</p>	<p>Introduction to lacrosse, football, soccer and basketball Rules Cooperation Sportsmanship Fitness testing</p>
Fourth Grade	<p>Being compassionate Jesus' call to serve Jesus teaches in signs Jesus' promise of new life</p> <p>Gospel Weeklies: Venture series</p>	<p>Drawing & painting Print making Sculpture & assemblage proper use of various tools, papers and clay. Elements of art</p> <p>Artist study: Alexander Calder, Pablo Picasso, Theodore Geisel</p>	<p>General music track: Expansion of previous intro. skills More advanced reading & notating Interpreting songs Composer focus: Liszt, Hayden, Handel Instrumental track: violin After School choir (optional)</p>	<p>More advanced skills in lacrosse, football, soccer and basketball; rules, cooperation, sportsmanship; Fitness testing</p>