

2017 - 2018

Curriculum In A Nutshell



Excellence Without Exception

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What Your Child Will Learn In

Grade
3

Dear Families,

It is a pleasure to share our 2017-2018 *Curriculum in A Nutshell*, a brief overview of all areas of the Kindergarten through Grade 5 West Hartford Curriculum. This edition outlines the curriculum for your child's respective grade in school. Using basic skills and experiences as building blocks, the West Hartford Curriculum identifies what children learn at each grade level and represents a balanced and comprehensive program of all academic areas. Our curriculum is based on the Connecticut Core Standards and provides instruction on the essential literacy and mathematics skills and understandings necessary for success on both district and state assessments. The West Hartford curriculum also includes an integration of the visual and performing arts, science, social studies, physical education, world language (grades 3-5) and library media services.



This curriculum comes alive in the hands of our talented teachers who are committed to ensuring that our students reach their highest potential. We are dedicated to accommodating children's diverse needs, the way they learn, their experiences and interests, and to facilitating continuous educational growth. If you should have any questions about your child's curriculum, your classroom teacher is the best source of information.

No single document can fully explain the rich and complex nature of the school curriculum and instructional goals. We know that learning is optimized in a partnership with families, teachers, and schools. Working together, we can use your experiences as a family and our work in the classroom to create a respectful climate of academic success and joy for lifelong learning.

Sincerely,

Paul W. Vicinus, Jr.
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

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Language Arts

This year your child will be working to develop his or her understanding and mastery of Grade 3 Connecticut Core Standards for English-Language Arts. These standards integrate all aspects of Language Arts development and are categorized under Reading, Writing, Speaking & Listening, and Language. Your child's teacher will use a wide variety of instructional strategies and formats to help your child learn and progress toward mastery of these standards by the end of the school year.

Reading

- **Apply Phonics and Word Recognition Skills**

Know and apply grade level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.

Identify and know the meaning of common prefixes and derivational suffixes (e.g., re-, pre-, -er, -ing).

Decode multisyllable words (e.g., deliberate, flexible).

Decode words with common Latin suffixes (e.g., -able, -ible, -ence).

Read grade appropriate irregularly spelled words.

- **Read with Fluency**

Read on level text with appropriate text, prose and poetry with appropriate accuracy, rate and expression.

- **Identify Key Ideas and Details**

Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of literature and informational text; refer explicitly to the text as the basis for answers.

Recount stories, determine the central message, lesson or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key ideas in the text.

Determine main idea of a text, recount key details and explain how they support the main idea.

Describe characters in a story and explain how their actions

contribute to the sequence of events.

Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific concepts or steps in technical procedures in a text using appropriate time, sequence or cause/effect language.

- **Understand the Structure of Texts**

Determine the meaning of words and phrases distinguishing literal from nonliteral language.

Refer to parts of stories, dramas and poems using terms such as chapter, scene and stanza; describe how successive parts build upon earlier sections.

Distinguish your point of view from that of the narrator or a character in the story or the author of a text.

Determine the meaning of grade appropriate words and phrases in informational text.

Use text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to efficiently locate information relevant to a given topic.

- **Integrate Knowledge and Ideas Within and Across Texts**

Explain how specific aspects of an illustration contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story or text.

Compare and contrast the themes,

settings, and plots of stories written by the same author about the same or similar characters.

Describe the connection between sentences and paragraphs in a text (e.g., comparison, cause/effect, first/second/third in a sequence).

Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic.

- **Read and Comprehend a Range of Texts with Appropriate Grade Level Complexity**

Proficiently and independently read and comprehend a variety of texts in the grade 2 – 3 text complexity range.

Language

- **Demonstrate Command of Conventions of Standard English**

Apply parts of speech correctly when writing and speaking.

Produce simple, compound and complex sentences.

Apply capitalization, punctuation and spelling when writing.

- **Use Knowledge of Language**

Choose words and phrases for effect.

Apply formal and informal uses of English.

- **Understand and Use Grade Appropriate Vocabulary**

Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases using a variety of strategies.

Demonstrate an understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

Acquire and accurately use conversational, academic and domain-specific words and phrases.

Speaking And Listening

- **Participate in Collaborative Conversations with Understanding**

Come to discussions prepared, follow agreed upon rules for discussion, ask questions to check understanding and explain understanding of the topic under discussion.

Determine main idea and supporting details of a text or information presented in diverse media and formats.

Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail.

- **Present Knowledge and Ideas Clearly**

Report on a topic, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant details speaking clearly at an understandable pace.

Create engaging audio recordings that demonstrate fluid reading at an understandable pace and add visual displays when appropriate.

Speak in complete sentences when appropriate to the situation in order to provide requested detail and clarification.

Writing

Teachers use the Writers' Workshop model to plan the following narrative, information, and opinion writing units:

Narrative: Crafting True Stories

Information: The Art of Information Writing

Opinion: Changing the World

Each writing block includes a short mini-lesson focusing on the writing process, writing conventions, and/or craft. Students then work on assigned or self-selected writing pieces as teachers confer with students either individually or in small groups. The workshop lesson closes with sharing time during which students celebrate and reflect on their writing and the writing process.

Handwriting

- Is introduced to Zaner Bloser cursive alphabet in fall.
- Learn, review and practice Zaner Bloser cursive alphabet.

Keyboarding

The third grade *Keyboarding Without Tears* program uses activities to sharpen accuracy and fluency skills. With basic keyboarding well in hand, students practice frequently rotating themes including Sing & Play, Famous Faces, Greek & Latin, and Great Grammar. Spot Checks within the program are used to gauge student understanding of specific skills. Each Spot Check measures speed and accuracy. The end of Grade 3 keyboarding benchmark expectation is 10 words per minute (wpm) with 90% accuracy. Proper technique and posture are emphasized at all grade levels.

All students in Grades 2-5 have access to the *Keyboarding Without Tears* (KWT) program for keyboarding practice at home and school. Information on home access will be provided by your child's classroom teacher and school Library-Media Specialist during the first month of school.





Mathematics

Our mathematics curriculum is based on the Connecticut Core Standards for Mathematics (CCSS-M) that define what students should understand and be able to do by the end of the year at each grade level. The Connecticut Core Standards for Mathematics have two key components:

- (1) **Standards for Mathematical Practice** – eight practices in which students engage at all grade levels
- (2) **Standards for Mathematical Content** - conceptual understandings and procedural knowledge and skills

The Content Standards at each grade level are grouped into domains (e.g. Geometry) and clusters within each domain.

Our instructional focus in Grade 3 is on four critical areas: (1) developing understanding of multiplication and division and strategies for multiplication and division within 100; (2) developing understanding of fractions, especially unit fractions (fractions with numerator 1); (3) developing understanding of the structure of rectangular arrays and of area; and (4) describing and analyzing two-dimensional shapes. To provide you with an understanding of your child’s mathematics learning, we have highlighted domains and clusters of standards for Grade 3 below. A comprehensive description of the Connecticut Core Standards for Mathematics is available at <http://www.corestandards.org/>

Mathematical Practices

- Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
- Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
- Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
- Model with mathematics.
- Use appropriate tools strategically.
- Attend to precision.
- Look for and make use of structure.
- Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

Key Fluencies

- Add/subtract within 1,000 using strategies and algorithms based on place value, properties of operations, and/or the relationship between addition and subtraction.
- Multiply/divide within 100 using strategies and algorithms based on the relationship between multiplication and division or properties of operations.
- Know from memory all products of two one-digit numbers.

Operations and Algebraic Thinking

- Represent and solve problems involving multiplication and division.
- Understand properties of multiplication and the relationship between multiplication and division.
- Multiply and divide within 100.
- Solve problems involving the four operations, and identify and explain patterns in arithmetic.

Number and Operations in Base Ten

- Use place value understanding and properties of operations to perform multi-digit arithmetic.

Number and Operations – Fractions

- Develop understanding of fractions as numbers.

Measurement and Data

- Solve problems involving measurement and estimation of intervals of time to nearest minute, liquid and volumes, and masses of objects.
- Represent and interpret data.
- Geometric measurement: understand concepts of area and relate area to multiplication and to addition.
- Geometric measurement: recognize perimeter as an attribute of plane figures and distinguish between linear and area measures.

Geometry

- Reason with shapes and their attributes.



Social Studies

The Social Studies curriculum was developed with guidance from the Connecticut Social Studies Framework passed by the State Board of Education in February 2015. This Connecticut framework provides a foundation for teaching history, civics and government, geography, and economics in all grade levels. Over the next 3 years, we will be revising our current Social Studies curriculum. During the 2017-2018 school year, all grade levels will teach a series of skills related to Geography and Civics. A summary of these skills are below:

Civics

- Develop an understanding of self, social standards and rules, along with the rights and responsibilities of citizens.
 - Develop a positive self-concept.
 - Develop an understanding of rules and responsibilities within communities.
- Determine ways one can address problems individually and collectively to improve the communities to which we belong.
 - Identify, understand, and regulate emotions of self and others.
 - Develop positive interpersonal relationships.
- Religious Holidays: Diwali/Divali, Dussehra, Durga Puja

Geography

- Explore maps and their purpose.
- Identify where one lives and locate important places on current and historical maps.
- Use maps to identify important information using symbols, legends, and keys.
- Give and follow directions.
- Create a variety of maps.

World Language

Aiken, Braeburn, Bugbee, Charter Oak, Duffy, Morley, Smith, Webster Hill, Whiting Lane and Wolcott-Spanish; Norfeldt - French

- Learn to communicate in French or Spanish through oral expression.
- Learn the correct pronunciation of specific French or Spanish vocabulary.
- Develop listening comprehension skills in French or Spanish.
- Learn the nuances of verbal/nonverbal communication in French or Spanish.
- Develop cultural awareness and cultural knowledge.

A theme referencing the French/Spanish speaking world is explored through colors, geometric shapes, greetings, classroom language, basic classroom objects, days, months, alphabet, weather, season, clothing and fruits. The cultural focus centers on French/Spanish-speaking Caribbean countries.

Science

The newly re-designed Grade 3 Science curriculum is based on the K-12 Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) passed by the CT State Board of Education in November, 2015. This standards-based framework emphasizes learning experiences that provide students with the skills and knowledge they need to be well-informed citizens, to be prepared for college and careers, and to understand and appreciate the essential role of science in our community and our world.

In third grade, students are able to organize and use data to describe typical weather conditions expected during a particular season. By applying their understanding of weather-related hazards, students make a claim about the merit of a design solution that reduces the impacts of such hazards. Students compare organisms’ life cycles and are also able to develop an understanding that organisms have different inherited traits and that the environment can also affect the traits the organism develops. In addition, students explore and use evidence to explain how differences in characteristics among organisms may provide advantages for survival. Grade three students also investigate organisms that lived long ago and the nature of the organisms’ environments.

In the area of physical science, students determine the effects of balanced and unbalanced forces on the motion of an object as well as the cause & effect relationships of electric or magnetic interactions between two objects not in contact with each other. Students apply their understanding of magnetic interactions to define a simple design problem that can be solved with magnets.

To demonstrate their understanding of the core ideas indicated above, third grade students engage in the following science and engineering practices:

- Asking questions and defining problems
- Developing and using models
- Planning and carrying out investigations
- Analyzing and interpreting data
- Using mathematics and computational thinking
- Constructing explanations and designing solutions
- Engaging in argument from evidence
- Obtaining, evaluating and communicating information



Visual Arts

The Visual Arts Department promotes artistic development, fosters development of visual literacy, critical thinking skills, intellectual risk-taking and lifelong learning. The curriculum is grounded in the (1994) National Standards. The curriculum is currently being revised using the National Core Arts Standards DRAFT (2015) (NCAS) as a guide. The program strives to address the four components of Art Education in the following ways (suggested concepts to be addressed appear in *italics*):

Art History/Culture

Understand visual art in history and culture through studying artists such as:

- Vincent van Gogh (*Post Impressionism*)
- Henri Matisse (*pattern*)
- Alexander Calder (*mobile, stabile, sculpture*)
- Native American art (*symbolism*)
- Additional cultures, artists and art forms

Art Production

Produce visual expressions; design and communicate through art:

- Drawing: explore materials and concepts to develop a more personal style and attention to detail.
- Painting/Three-Dimensional Forms: continue to explore and develop skills with emphasis on individual expression.
- Experience a variety of media and techniques (possibly print making, collage and fiber art).

Art Criticism

- Make reasoned judgments about visual art.
- Apply and discuss appropriate elements and principles of design and visual arts vocabulary.
- Continue to build visual literacy skills.

Aesthetics

- Make informed opinions about visual art and is able to support the basis for forming those judgments.
- Learn to use art vocabulary to form judgments and opinions about works of art.

Physical Education

The Elementary Physical Education department strives to create physically literate students. At the elementary level, we ensure that students are exposed to foundational skills that they will build upon throughout their Physical Education experience in West Hartford Public Schools. Our curriculum is aligned to SHAPE AMERICA's National Standards and the State of Connecticut's Healthy and Balanced Living Framework. Concepts that students will be engaged in are:

- Efficiently perform more complex locomotor and non-locomotor skills and combinations while maintaining good body control.
- Demonstrate more complex combinations of manipulative skills (e.g., striking) using a variety of implements and different body parts.
- Apply movement concepts (e.g., flow, force) to movements.
- Perform rhythmic patterns through creative or cultural dance movement, as well as through movement activities using manipulatives.
- Participate in a variety of moderate to vigorous physical activities that promote fitness and an understanding of the components as defined by the Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessments.
- Participate in movement tasks (both on the floor and on the apparatus) that require creative or critical thinking.
- Participate in cooperative adventure and group activities that require teamwork to achieve success.

Music

Vocal Music

Singing is the foundation of all music skills in the elementary vocal music curriculum. Music skills are sequentially taught and divided into five content areas: melody, rhythm, reading and writing, part work and form, using grade appropriate songs, singing games and rounds.

Singing

- Sing songs independently; in tune, accurately, including partner songs and rounds.
- Sing expressively, with the appropriate dynamics, phrasing and interpretation.

Performing/Improvising

- Perform expressively a varied repertoire.
- Demonstrate part-work, e.g., simple rounds.

Reading/Notating

- Read and write simple rhythmic and melodic patterns, e.g., sixteenth notes, pentatonic scale.
- Identify symbols and traditional terms referring to dynamics, tempo and articulation.
- Identify simple form, e.g., first and second ending.

Listening/Evaluating

- Listen to and recognize simple forms and styles.
- Use terminology in describing and analyzing music, e.g., round.

Understanding Culture/History

- Identify ways in which other disciplines are interrelated with music.
- Sing songs and play games that explore cultural diversity, e.g., Native American and West Indies.
- Put music into a cultural and historical context.



Library Media Services

The library media program in the elementary school provides the foundation skills for students to become critical users of information, and readers for lifelong learning. *Standards for the 21st-Century Learner* published by the American Association of School Librarians provides the framework for instruction. By the end of grade 5 students will:

Standard 1—Inquire, think critically, and gain knowledge.

- Find, evaluate, and select appropriate sources to answer questions.
- Read, view, and listen for information presented in any format (e.g., textual, visual, media, digital) in order to make inferences and gather meaning.
- Make sense of information gathered from diverse sources by identifying misconceptions, main and supporting ideas, conflicting information and point of view or bias.
- Demonstrate mastery of technology tools to access information and pursue inquiry.

Standard 2—Draw conclusions, make informed decisions, apply knowledge to new situations, and create new knowledge.

- Continue an inquiry-based research process by applying critical thinking skills (analysis, synthesis, evaluation, organization) to information and knowledge in order to construct new understandings, draw conclusions, and create new knowledge.
- Use technology and other information tools to analyze and organize information.
- Use the writing process, media and visual literacy, and technology skills to create products that express new understandings.

Standard 3—Share knowledge and participate ethically and productively as members of our democratic society.

- Conclude an inquiry-based research process by sharing new understandings and reflecting on the learning.
- Use information and technology ethically and responsibly.
- Contribute to the exchange of ideas within and beyond the learning community.

Standard 4—Pursue personal and aesthetic growth.

- Respond to literature and creative expressions of ideas in various formats and genres.
- Show an appreciation for literature by electing to read for pleasure and expressing interest in various literary genres.

Health

- Make healthy eating choices, including eating a variety of foods that are lower in added sugar, fat and sodium.
- Explain safe practices of using medicines, including over the counter medicines and prescriptions.
- Identify similarities and differences between one's thinking, actions, appearance and lifestyles and those of others.
- Develop conflict resolution strategies.
- Practice effective communication skills, including how to make conversations and ways to use assertive strategies when necessary.
- Practice using problem-solving strategies in social situations, such as resisting peer pressure and resisting the impulse to steal or lie.
- Demonstrate calming-down techniques in a variety of situations, including times when they are stressed.
- Identify ways to access help or support when needed from trusted adults, including if on the Internet.
- Practice using the Internet safely with an emphasis on netiquette.

West Hartford Community Relations police officers assist in teaching some of these objectives.

