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The mission of The Birches Academy is to cultivate a learning community that promotes excellence in core academics and the arts while valuing the individual qualities and strengths of each child.

Kindergarten at a Glance

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

The language arts curriculum is aligned to the ELA Common Core (<http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/>), which outlines grade-level expectations in the form of standards. The grade-specific standards are categorized as reading, writing, language & speaking and listening. Students engage in a variety of activities while building language arts skills through an arts integration approach to learning.

The teachers at Birches Academy utilize a variety of instructional resources and strategies to meet the needs of all learners. The instructional resources include the *Six Traits of Writing*, *Benchmark's Writers Workshop* and the *Fountas & Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention System*. The strategies include mini-lessons, small group instruction, independent reading, a guided reading program and the six traits writing process. Students enrolled at Birches Academy of Academics and Art can expect to progress through the grades while developing proficiency in all four areas of the Common Core.

Overview of Expectations

- Recognize the letters of the alphabet and identify the upper and lower case letters.
- Begin to print in upper and lower case the letters of the alphabet.
- Look at a sample of basic print and recognize that reading is from left to right.
- Understand that words are made up of varying sequence of letters.
- Explore rhyming words with a focus on three letter words comprised of two consonants and a vowel.
- Recognize the difference between a storybook, poem and a non-fiction biography.
- Engage in individual reading and group reading activities.
- Engage in conversation within peer groupings and with adults.
- Observe and describe in detail orally and through drawings people, places, and things.

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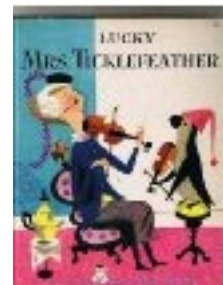
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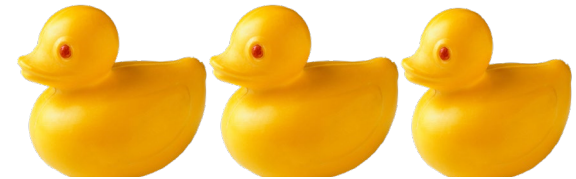


MATHEMATICS

The mathematics curriculum is aligned to the Mathematics Common Core (<http://www.corestandards.org/Math/>) with a focus on concept development, big ideas and essentials of understanding. The Mathematics Common Core is comprised of strands and specific grade-level standards that define what students should know and be able to do. The Kindergarten math instructional time focuses on whole number operations, shapes and space. The instructional resource is Pearson *EnVision Math*.

The instructional approach allows for the daily reinforcement of basic skills as students gain a greater understanding of mathematical concepts and demonstrate proficiency in grade-level expectations. Based on assessment, student may engage in advanced mathematical studies consistent with the learning progression.

Overview of Expectations



- Recognizing numbers and the name of the number.
- Counting objects and gaining an understanding of counting sequence.
- Developing an understanding of putting numbers together to taking a number away from another number.
- Use the numbers 11-19 building a foundation in place value.
- Identify different shapes visually and name and count objects in different categories.
- Describe and draw a variety of shapes building a foundation for geometry.

1 ONE
2 TWO
3 THREE
4 FOUR

1 + 1 = 2

SCIENCE

The science curriculum is aligned to the Next Generation of Science Standards (<http://www.nextgenscience.org/next-generation-science-standards>), a framework for K-12 Science education developed through a collaborative process. The framework is comprised of three disciplinary areas including physical science, life science, and Earth and space science where instruction is guided by grade-level performance expectations. A fourth area—engineering, technology and applications of science—identifies performance expectation by grade span.

The focus of study in Kindergarten includes physical science the life sciences. Students gain a perception of the world around them where knowledge and understanding become the underpinnings for socially responsible and caring young adults. Science instruction combines classroom discussion, hands-on activities, experiments and research. The science instructional resource is Pearson Interactive Science along with supplemental materials including audiovisuals, books, puzzles and a variety of manipulative items to develop fine and gross motor skills.

Overview of Expectations

Physical Science

- Understand varying strength /force while pushing and pulling.
- Using a marble or other object explore the effects of changing strength/force, speed and or direction.
- Investigate temperate as it relates to the heating of objects through absorption of radiant energy from the sun.

Life Science

- Observe the needs of plants and animals for survival.
- Explain how plants and animals can use the environment to meet individual needs and enhance survival rates.

Earth and Space Science

- Use observations of weather conditions and describe seasonal patterns.
- Explore local weather through the collection of data and make predications or forecasts.
- Begin to develop an understanding of recycling and the benefits to the environment and on living things.

SOCIAL STUDIES

The social studies curriculum is aligned to the New Hampshire State Curriculum Framework for Social Studies (http://www.education.nh.gov/instruction/curriculum/social_studies/documents/frameworks.pdf). The Framework is divided into five content strands including civics, economics, geography, New Hampshire and United States history, world history and contemporary issues. Instruction combines classroom discussion, project-based learning, current topics in history and research.

Overview of Expectations

Civics and Government

- Review the rules of the school
- Develop classroom rules
- Identify symbols that embody the core ideals of America and Americans
- Discuss elections and the purpose of elections as it relates to New Hampshire and the United States.

Economics

- Understand the difference between needs and wants.
- Compare and contrast producers and consumers.

Geography

- Gain an understanding of a family unit made up of individuals and families as part of a community and the school.
- Identify resources specific to the area including trees, minerals, water, and agricultural goods.
- Introduce a globe of the Earth, world maps, the map of New Hampshire, and a local area map.

US and NH History

- Celebrate New Hampshire holidays in school, display the American flag and identify local monuments.
- Begin to gain an understanding of connections between cities, states, and countries in North America.

World History

- Explore the music, dance, rituals, clothing, and foods of the different cultures within the countries of North America.

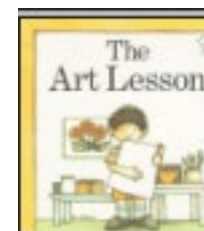
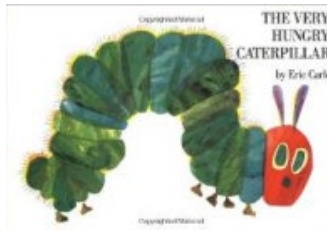


ART

The art program provides students with an introduction to the arts and art forms. Students explore color, textures, and mediums while developing an appreciation for the arts. Teachers work collaboratively with the art teacher to give students every opportunity to express thoughts and ideas through the arts.

Overview of Expectations

- Introduction to a variety of tools that aid in the development of fine motor skills and hand and mind coordination
- Explore various materials used in art materials
- Create individual works of art
- Develop observational skills describing the work of others
- Begin to identify works of art that belong to specific cultures, times and places



MUSIC

The music program is designed to instill a love of music and an introduction to the art of music. Students explore music through listening, moving to rhythms and singing a variety of songs. Beginning music theory introduces students to basic melody and music notations. Students attend general music twice per week and engage in a variety of performances. Teachers collaborate, ensuring that students have every opportunity to express thoughts and ideas through music and the arts.

Overview of Expectations

- Develop a singing voice with singing alone and with others.
- Introduction to reading music including the score sheet, staff, sharps, flats and whole, half and quarter notes.
- Explore percussion instruments—rain sticks, maraca, wood blocks and Orff instruments.
- Listen to the music of an orchestra, and begin to identify the instruments that create the various sounds.
- Begin kinesthetic and movement to music.



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PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students participate in age appropriate, safe and effective physical activities based on the New Hampshire K-12 Physical Education Curriculum Guidelines. The program encourages students to perform a variety of physical activities that focus on building motor skills and the qualities of movement. A pre and post "Pacer" assessment is conducted to determine cardiovascular endurance. This assessment demonstrates student growth and indicates what students need to improve on and/or maintain for physical health and well-being.

SPANISH

The Spanish students in (Kindergarten or Grades 1 and 2) acquire the language and internalize it rather than "learn" it. Through songs, dance, charades, games and being silly, the children's aptitude in Spanish is easily shared. More importantly, the children have fun and hone a "love of learning" to carry into all things. Students have the option to do written assignments if they wish. We also explore holidays, customs and culture of various Spanish-speaking countries through videos and crafts.

The content has been curated from the Common Core ELA and Math, Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), and the K-12 NH Social Studies Curriculum Framework (July 2014).