

Fifth Grade Curriculum 2009 – 2010

High Peaks Elementary

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The fifth grade Core Knowledge Sequence is both fascinating and challenging. As we work through this broad base of knowledge, subjects will be integrated to bring the learning to life. Students will be writing in math and calculating in their writing. They will learn more about our world and demonstrate their reading skills in social studies and science. Connections across the curriculum will add depth to our studies this year.

☀ **Language Arts** ☀

Writing: Writing projects will be mostly linked with our topics in literature, science, and social studies through out the year. We will be writing in a variety of genres including: narratives, poetry, research projects, essays, drama, letters, speeches, etc. Throughout the year we will be working to improve our vocabulary and our ability to describe and use precise language. We will be working to improve and add variety to our sentence and paragraph structure to better organize and express our thoughts. Research projects will help the students to synthesize what they read into what they write. The students will also be required to compile a basic bibliography for those projects. Writing will be an integral part of our studies.

Grammar/Word Study: In their writing, the students will be expected to improve in their abilities to use proper English grammar and spelling. They will demonstrate an understanding of their increasing skills in their writing and editing abilities. We will review and practice recognition of the basic parts of speech. There will be grammar, editing, and word study lessons to teach proper usage throughout the year. All grade levels at High Peaks will be using the *Rebecca Sitton* spelling/word study program.

Reading: The students will be reading a great amount in fifth grade. It is ideal for them to have the opportunity to choose a large amount of what they read according to their own interests. The students are expected to read at

least 30 minutes each day; 3-step reading is recommended. Reading outside of school should be recorded daily in their Reading Logs. Please take a look at your child's log to see how reading logs are to be completed. Often there will be reading assignments sent home. They can also be used for reading log entries.

Stories/Fiction/Drama: The Core Knowledge 5th grade literature program includes a wide variety of fascinating stories, drama, speeches, and myths and legends. Often times these will be tied in directly with our social studies units. Please see the yearly plan at the end of this packet for specific titles.

☀ Social Studies ☀

Geography: Our social studies program will include a study of world geography. We will be studying coordinate geography and learn about the various climate and time zones. As we study particular world civilizations, we will review the geography of the corresponding regions. There will be tests on the countries of Central and South America, Europe, Asia, and the states and capitals of the United States of America. We will also be familiarizing ourselves with the great lakes of the world.

World Civilization: Our world studies will progress chronologically beginning with the Mesoamerican civilizations of the Maya, Inca, and Aztec and the arrival of the Spanish Conquerors. The study of these classic civilizations and their falls will then be used as a springboard into the age of European exploration, trade, and colonization. This time period, and the incredible increase in information and curiosity that it fostered, will lead us into our investigation of the Renaissance, Reformation and the English Revolution. We will then explore the eastern edges of Europe and the early growth of Russia until we push to the Far East to experience a unit on Feudal Japan.

American Civilization: The other half of our social studies program will focus on 19th Century American History. This intensely dynamic time in history encompasses the Western Expansion, the Civil War and Reconstruction, and the conflicts with the Plains and Western Native American groups. The importance and influence of natural resources and climate will be tied into our historical studies.

☀ Mathematics ☀

All grade levels at High Peaks will be using Everyday Math (University of Chicago Mathematics Project) in our math classes. This program, which is supported by a wide range of research, matches up well with the Core Knowledge Sequence as well as the BVSD Standards and The Standards as developed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. We feel that this program helps create strong mathematical thinkers and provides a fluid transition to middle school mathematics programs.

☀ Science ☀

In fifth grade, our first science unit will be the study of chemistry to prepare students for the November 6th & 7th Science Fair. The students will be learning about the basic building blocks of matter and chemical notation. Our studies will include states of matter as well as chemical and physical change. This unit will challenge students to inquire and use the “scientific process” to explore our world. We encourage students to do chemistry related projects for science fair this year to align them with the studies that are already taking place, adding depth to the program, and ultimately leading to more learning.

Our biology unit will begin with the classification of living things. This will be followed by the study of plant and animal cells and their structures and processes. We will then move into a larger unit on plant structures, growth, and photosynthesis.

Towards spring, we will begin a unit on the endocrine system. We will investigate the importance of the major glands of the body for digestion, and chemical balance, and other hormones while leaving those related to human growth and development for a special unit at the end of the year. This will allow us to deal with the important health issues related to the thyroid, pancreas, and other major glands in isolation.

Following this unit we will return once again to plants in order to refresh our memories and investigate more fully the life cycles of plants. This will then lead into a short unit dealing with animal reproduction, first in non-mammals and then in mammals. Our last unit of the year will deal then specifically with the changes of adolescence and human growth and development.

Cal-Wood: Our overnight trip to Cal-Wood is planned for April 14th – 16th. This outdoor education program allows us excellent hands on opportunities to build upon our studies of classification, cells, plants, and chemistry, as well as supporting a host of social skills. Although space is limited, if you are interested in volunteering to help chaperone this trip, please contact your child's teacher.

Homework Expectations

Reading: Students will read for 30 minutes each night; 3 ½ hours weekly (ideally “3 – Step Reading”). Reading logs are due at the beginning of each week.

Writing: Students will write in their journals/writer's notebooks for 15 minutes, four times each week. Journals are to be turned in each week for teacher review.

Math: Homework in mathematics will be given every Monday - Thursday with the possible exception of assessment days.

Word Study: Homework in our word study program, *Rebecca Sitton*, will be given at the discretion of your child's word study teacher.

Planners: Students are responsible to keep a planner to record all homework assignments and events; planners will be provided.

Science: All fifth grade students are responsible for developing and presenting their own Science Fair project reflecting the study of chemistry. Science Fair is November 7th.

- **Other:** Students may be assigned homework in social studies, geography, and language arts as needed. Students may be asked to complete assignments at home that they were unable to finish in class.
- ***Please contact me with any questions or concerns regarding homework as modifications can be made when necessary.***

