

Our Place in Our Communities

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# CurriculumGuide

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Fifth Grade

the **LernerSchool**  
Learning for Life

Fifth Graders, as the oldest students at school, step into unique leadership positions. Throughout the year, they learn to see themselves as role models for the younger children and examples of positive action and behavior in the wider community. They take on greater responsibilities within the school community, such as reading with Kindergarten students and serving as ambassadors and leaders during school events. Through their study of American history and government they learn the roles and responsibilities of educated citizens and apply these traits to their interactions at school, home, and the wider community.

### LITERACY

Thinking, writing, and speaking about literature are at the center of our reading program. Through student-led literature circles, Fifth Graders develop strong reading habits such as reading closely for deeper meaning, analyzing character motivations and other literary elements, connecting texts to each other and to their own lives, and asking and answering meaningful questions about what they read. Fifth Graders focus on note-taking and outlining skills, and write research papers related to their Social Studies and Science content work. Students also learn to find the main idea in a non-fiction text, paraphrase, and use topic and supporting sentences. Spelling patterns and self-editing skills are explicitly studied through the Sitton Spelling program, which focuses on “spelling for writing” rather than word-list memorization. These skills are applied as the students create class newspapers, respond to literature, and compose and perform original Tall Tales. The Writer’s Workshop program provides students with opportunities to write in a wide range of genres and experience seeing themselves as “real” writers. Fifth Graders hone their touch-typing and keyboarding skills using the Keyboarding Without Tears program, and encounter the world of digital citizenship through Google Apps. Our one-to-one Chromebook program ensures that each child has ample opportunity to explore the technology that will help shape their academic lives for years to come. Fifth Graders learn about online collaboration and practice peer editing through their writing and project work on Google Drive.

Resources we use include, but are not limited to:

- Sitton Spelling
- Daily Grammar Workshop and IXL Grammar
- Units of Study for Reading and Writing (Teachers College Reading and Writing Workshop)
- Literary Cafe novels and theme-related novels
- Topical non-fiction and web resources

## MATH

We use the Everyday Mathematics Program as the basis for our math learning, which stresses flexible thinking, number sense, and creative problem solving. Math concepts are utilized throughout the day and integrated with units of study across the curriculum. The flexible thinking skills and oral and written explanation of how one arrived at one's answer encouraged in math class correspond with and build on similar skills the students use as they work with literature, social studies, science, and Judaics topics. Students are provided with ample opportunities to apply their math skills throughout the day, whether working with US Census data, calculating the amount of work a specific force accomplishes, or using graphing and ratios to create scale models of the school playfields. Our students utilize the IXL math practice website to enhance their math skills and follow individualized programs that track and reward their progress. Mastery of basic facts is fostered through Rocketship Math, a fun and engaging "fast facts" daily practice. In Fourth Grade, a few of the math concepts your child will work with include:

In Fifth Grade, a few of the math concepts your child will work with include:

- Factorization, prime numbers, and square roots
- "Long" multiplication and division, multiplication and division with decimals
- Computing with fractions, working with fractions with different denominators
- Place value to the billions and millionths
- Scientific notation and exponents
- Variables and beginning algebraic equations
- Using a protractor and compass; constructing angles, circles, and polygons
- Rates, ratios, and percents
- Area and volume
- Data landmarks (median, mode, range) and graphing

## SOCIAL STUDIES

In an effort to expose our students to the benefits of multi-age, interdisciplinary learning, our Fourth and Fifth Grade Social Studies and Science classes will be combined and integrated. The major Social Studies themes will thus be intertwined with the Science curricula. The Fourth/Fifth Grade themes for the 2017–2018 school year include U.S. and World Geography, Leadership, American Revolution, U.S. Government and Constitution, Civil Rights, and a major interdisciplinary project on Jewish American history. One of the culminating projects for the year will include a research paper and presentation on the modern U.S. that will require students to utilize their research, technology, reading comprehension, writing, and oral communication skills. In the process of completing the project, the students will "become" a significant figure from Jewish American history in an area of interest for them. The 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders will go on field trips to the state capitol, Book Harvest, and Bennett Place, and will seek out opportunities to meet with local Jewish scientists, artists, writers, scholars, leaders, and educators of renown.

Throughout the year, the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students will also engage in service learning projects tied to their Social Studies and Judaic Studies units. One major service project involves collecting books to donate to Book Harvest while studying the impact of literacy on communities throughout the world.

## SCIENCE

The study of Science at Lerner is a hands-on, inquiry-driven learning experience. Through the innovative STEMscopes Curriculum, coupled with teacher generated resources and utilizing the outdoor environment, students are given ample opportunities to explore, ask questions, form hypotheses, experiment, and come to their own conclusions. STEMscopes is a project-based curriculum utilizing the scientifically proven 5E Model: Engage, Explore, Explain, Evaluate, and Elaborate, and has its pedagogical roots in Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences. Each unit of study provides hands-on opportunities for these five learning goals. The combined Fourth Grade/ Fifth Grade units of study, which are connected explicitly to the Social Studies themes, include Matter, Gravity, Energy Transfer, Earth Systems, Human Footprint, and Reducing the Human Footprint. At the beginning of the year, students will incorporate a thorough evaluation of scientific procedures and principles, as well as investigate the human brain and cognition in connection to their efforts to build greater self-awareness.

At Lerner, a strong emphasis is placed on values and ethics. While learning about the human footprint on the earth, students discuss the Jewish values of tza'ar ba'alei chayim (caring for animals and plants), ba'al tashkit (respecting and caring for the environment), and tikkun olam (taking care of the world). As they research Jewish Americans in Science, Social Studies and Judaic Studies, Fourth and Fifth Graders discover how their predecessors established a foundation of excellence in fields that encourage speculation, exploration, experimentation, and application of knowledge to aid scientific, technological, and artistic innovation.

## JUDAIC STUDIES

The Jewish Studies program at Lerner fosters a love of tradition and community, builds a sense of values and responsibility to one another, engenders a strong Jewish identity, and creates confident Jewish learners and participants. Fifth Graders continue their Torah study with the Sipurei Yosef books of the MaToK Bible Curriculum, focusing on the story of Joseph and his family. Through their work with MaToK, students engage with the Torah text on a variety of levels. They study the literal meaning of the text as well as the many interpretations, and have ample opportunities to "unpack" and experience the text through discussion, role-play, art, asking and answering questions, and storytelling. Fifth Graders study the meanings and history of t'fillot (prayers) from the Shacharit (weekday morning) service, act as shelichei tzibur (prayer leaders), and explore what the Mishnah has to say about each holiday.

## HEBREW

Hebrew language instruction at Lerner takes place through the "Ivrit b'Ivrit" (Hebrew immersion) Tal Am curriculum. In the Fifth Grade, students draw on their knowledge of shoreshim (word roots) to enrich and increase their vocabulary and to understand unfamiliar words, learn to conjugate verbs in the future tense, and expand their writing abilities to craft longer multiple-paragraph stories. They read a variety of Hebrew texts for information as well as enjoyment, and build on their reading fluency to understand the more nuanced meaning of a text rather than translating literally word for word. Emphasis is placed on using verbs in all three tenses in written and verbal communication. Songs, games, art, and creating and performing short skits all enrich the Hebrew experience.

### SPOTLIGHT ON...LEADERSHIP

Fifth Graders spend their year investigating what it means to be a leader. Through their study of American history and government, they discuss characteristics of famous leaders and the many small and large ways non-violent social activism can make a difference. Fifth Grade students take a variety of leadership roles throughout the school, from maintaining outdoor and indoor shared spaces to leading T'fillah and reading from the Torah for the school community to running the Purim Carnival. They are encouraged to draw on all they have learned at Lerner to see themselves as agents of positive change in the world and to utilize their writing, creative thinking, problem-solving, and public speaking skills to share their opinions and ideas. As they prepare for Graduation, the Fifth Grade students reflect on their years at Lerner and actively examine the type of person they wish to be when they move on to different communities and new adventures. Their graduation speeches and projects epitomize the application of leadership skills that the Fifth Graders have built throughout the year.



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