

Fifth Grade Course of Study

English Language Arts 5

Fifth grade English Language Arts is a foundational course that integrates reading, grammar, writing, and vocabulary. Students read a variety of short stories, poetry, and 4 in-class novels to build reading comprehension, literary understanding, and a love of reading. Writing is an essential part of daily instruction and is reinforced across all units.

Grammar instruction is embedded within reading and writing and includes, but is not limited to, parts of speech, sentence types, sentence structure, and figurative language. Writing units focus on narrative, descriptive, and persuasive writing, with an emphasis on planning, revising, and editing. Vocabulary development is emphasized throughout the year to strengthen word knowledge and support both reading comprehension and written expression. Add information about citing sources to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. We also cover figurative language identification using annotation methods.

Ancient Cultures 5

Offering an interactive and comprehensive study of the world's earliest civilizations, this 5th grade history course engages and inspires students as they explore the origins of human society and the development of early cultures and empires. Students study prehistoric peoples and archaeology, as well as major civilizations such as Mesopotamia, Egypt, Ancient China, Ancient Greece, and the Roman Republic.

Throughout the course, students examine how civilizations emerged, rose to power, and eventually declined, while focusing on the political, social, economic, and technological innovations that shaped each society. Instruction emphasizes inquiry-based learning, purposeful writing, content-specific vocabulary, map skills, and project-based activities to strengthen historical and geographic understanding. Students are encouraged to think critically, make connections across civilizations, and reflect on how the achievements of ancient cultures continue to influence the modern world.

Math 5

In fifth grade, mathematics focuses on building a strong foundation in numerical reasoning, problem solving, and mathematical confidence. All students follow the same

course of study, which emphasizes conceptual understanding alongside skill development to ensure readiness for the transition to middle school mathematics.

Instruction centers on developing effective problem-solving strategies and mathematical reasoning through a progression of hands-on experiences, visual models, and abstract thinking. Students deepen their understanding of whole numbers, decimals, and fractions as they write and interpret numerical expressions, analyze patterns and relationships, and apply place value concepts. They build fluency with multi-digit operations, extend their understanding of fractions through addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, and apply measurement concepts including unit conversions and volume. Students also develop skills in data representation and interpretation and are introduced to coordinate graphing and geometric classification. Throughout the course, learning is grounded in real-world applications, balancing conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and meaningful problem solving.

Science 5

The fifth grade integrated science course is designed to build essential scientific skills and support a smooth transition from elementary science standards to more advanced coursework. The course provides students with an overview of common strands in integrated science, including scientific methods, Earth science, matter and its properties, and energy.

Students develop the skills needed to make careful observations, keep organized records, and use collected data to identify patterns and draw simple conclusions. They interpret and create maps as they investigate Earth's surface and explore the universe and the objects within it. Through hands-on investigations, students gain an understanding of matter and the properties and changes of matter, as well as energy, waves, light, and sound.

Fifth graders describe observations and communicate information using charts, graphs, and other visual representations. Technology is used to support investigation, research, and project creation as students explore scientific concepts and strengthen their analytical and problem-solving skills.

Foundations of Language 5

Foundations of Language is a core course designed to introduce students to how language works, where it comes from, and why it matters. Through a blend of linguistics, historical study, and a guided novel study, students explore the origins and development of language while building curiosity and mindfulness about how we communicate.

The course focuses on how language is structured and used, examining grammar at its roots and tracing the historical foundations of English. Students develop essential tools for studying language, including phonology, morphology, and etymology, while learning how languages evolve over time. Although this is not a foreign language course, it provides a strong foundation that supports future language learning by making linguistic patterns more visible and comprehensible. Throughout the year, students encounter and compare a variety of languages, deepening their understanding of language as both a system and a living form of human expression.

German/ International Program Grade 5

This course, aligned with the German *Gymnasium* Grade 5 curriculum, is designed for native German speakers and further develops students' abilities to read, write, and communicate effectively in their native language. Students engage with literature through basic literary theory, exploring texts within their social and historical contexts.

Throughout the year, students complete assignments grounded in the German curriculum, including narrative and creative writing that emphasizes structure, tension, and meaningful turning points. Instruction also incorporates European geography, prehistory, and antiquity, allowing students to make interdisciplinary connections between literature and history.

Students compose poems, stories, and scenes inspired by literary and historical texts, with a strong emphasis on reflection, revision, and rewriting. Grammar, spelling, and syntax are reinforced through grade-level practice. Course materials include two novels and a variety of digital resources. Assessments include written and grammar tests, presentations, and active class participation.

Electives:

In addition to the five core academic classes, all fifth grade students participate in elective courses. These classes provide opportunities for creative expression and hands-on, applied learning that complement the core curriculum. Electives support the development of well-rounded students by engaging creativity, physical activity, problem-solving, and different ways of thinking. Elective offerings may vary slightly from year to year.

Visual Art 5

Visual Art is a semester-long elective taken opposite Music that encourages creativity and artistic exploration. Students work with a variety of mediums and materials while learning basic artistic techniques and creative processes. The

course is hands-on, engaging, and emphasizes experimentation, self-expression, and craftsmanship. Having fun while creating and exploring ideas is an important part of the Visual Art experience.

Music 5

Fifth grade music is a semester-long elective that introduces students to making music through the recorder while building foundational musical skills. Students learn proper playing technique, rhythm, and basic music reading as they work through the Recorder Karate program, earning belts as they demonstrate growing skill and accuracy. Alongside performance, students explore the history of the recorder, its role in music across time, and composers and musical styles connected to the instrument. Lessons are hands-on and engaging, encouraging collaboration, confidence, and creativity while fostering an appreciation for music and shared performance.

PE 5

Physical Education is an active elective focused on developing fitness, coordination, and teamwork through a variety of movement-based activities. Students participate in individual and group exercises that build strength, endurance, and healthy habits. The course emphasizes sportsmanship, cooperation, and personal goal-setting in a supportive environment. Throughout the class, students are encouraged to challenge themselves, stay active, and have fun.

Study Skills 5

Fifth Grade Study Skills is designed to support students as they develop habits and strategies that lead to academic confidence and independence. Throughout the semester, students focus on organization, time management, note-taking, and effective study routines that help them manage their workload and approach learning with intention.

The course also emphasizes reading strategies, thoughtful test preparation, and responsible research skills, including evaluating sources and recognizing bias in online materials. Built into the class is dedicated time for students to practice these skills by organizing materials, completing assignments, and seeking support as needed. Participation and positive engagement are key components of the course and are reflected in weekly grades.

Performing Arts 5

Fifth Grade Performing Arts is a semester-long elective focused on developing public speaking and presentation skills essential for success in middle school. Through structured speaking activities, expressive reading, and low-stakes performance experiences, students practice clear voice projection, organization of ideas, and confident delivery.

The course emphasizes skills that transfer directly to academic settings, including class discussions, oral presentations, collaborative work, and audience awareness. Students are encouraged to reflect on their growth, take intellectual risks, and build confidence speaking in front of peers in preparation for the expectations of middle school coursework.

5th Grade Computer

5th Grade Computer introduces students to essential computer and digital literacy skills while helping them become thoughtful, responsible technology users. Using the Google Suite as a foundation, students build skills in communication, organization, collaboration, presentation, and research through hands-on, project-based learning that connects to core academic subjects. Throughout the course, students explore digital citizenship, including discussions about artificial intelligence—its benefits, limitations, and appropriate use—as well as their digital footprint and how online choices can have lasting effects. The class emphasizes selecting the right digital tool for a task while developing habits that promote creativity, safety, and responsible technology use.