

Elementary Curriculum Guide (Kindergarten-Fifth Grade) 2022-2023

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Wildwood School cultivates reflective scholars, bold innovators and passionate leaders equipped with the skills, ethics and inspiration to transform their world.

Elementary School Curriculum: Introduction

Wildwood's curriculum and approaches to teaching and learning are designed to actively engage students in the learning process. Our talented faculty act as guides, helping students expand their thinking and navigate their own self-discoveries. Projects, assignments, and classwork are often interdisciplinary, allowing children opportunities to make nuanced connections and deepen their understanding of the complexities of our world as well as noticing and appreciating all of its wonder and beauty.

The elementary curriculum is designed to help young children stay curious, inquisitive, and excited about learning. Our programs and approaches to teaching and learning allow students to build confidence and gain agility in reading, writing, mathematics, social studies, science, and the arts. Students develop the foundational skills for critical thinking, listening and speaking with clarity and conviction, comprehending oral and written words, learning how to conduct meaningful research as well as question it, and to creatively explore their own ideas.

In addition to their core subject areas, the specialist departments outside of the classroom include visual arts, performing arts (music and theater), science, technology, library, physical education, and health. Specialists and classroom teachers work collaboratively on a regular basis to integrate learning across subject areas. Intentional work around the understanding of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) is woven throughout all aspects of the curriculum and is closely connected to our social and emotional (SEL) programming.

All teaching and learning intentionally supports students as they develop skills in inquiry, information literacy, and self-expression. A Systems-Thinking lens is applied to all areas of the curriculum, guiding students to see and understand that everything in our universe is connected. Experiential learning outside the classroom includes field trips and community involvement.

At Wildwood, an emphasis on Life Skills is woven throughout the day and later on in middle and high school are reinforced with the Habits of Mind and Heart, all of which lay a solid foundation for authentic lifelong learning. Our advisory program is introduced in 5th grade, in preparation for the transition to middle school. Wildwood's elementary school curriculum builds skills sequentially, as mastery and confidence are achieved individually.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB)

Wildwood's diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging programming is integrated throughout the curriculum. In addition to this, Wildwood created an intentional grade level scope and sequence that ensures students have an opportunity to do a deep dive in each of the dimensions of self. Students explore, reflect, and learn about these identifiers through the anti-bias education framework which includes the goals of identity, diversity, justice, and action.

Wildwood Elementary DEIB Scope and Sequence:

- Kindergarten - Family structure
- First Grade - Gender
- Second Grade - Age and Abilities
- Third Grade - Language and Nationality
- Fourth Grade - Ethnicity and Appearance
- Fifth Grade - Race

Global Citizenship/UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Wildwood School was accredited by the Community of International Schools and has a strong commitment to teaching Global Citizenship content and skills. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals serve as the academic content that is woven into the Social Studies and Science curriculum at each grade level.

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

Wildwood's SEL programming focuses on fostering social, emotional, and ethical learning. The curriculum is aligned with the five core competencies (Self-Management, Self-Awareness, Social Awareness, Responsible Decision Making, and Relationship Skills) as identified by CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning). Students engage in weekly SEL lessons and activities that provide students opportunities to dive into learning and practice with each of these areas, as well as throughout the day as situations naturally arise. In addition to CASEL's framework, Wildwood utilizes resources from IFSEL (Institute for Social and Emotional Learning), an organization dedicated to providing school communities with the resources to bring SEL to life. They believe that social and emotional well-being is a human right. Their lessons allow teachers to use their creativity to teach these important lessons meaningfully and authentically. Their lessons are also aligned with CASEL's five core competencies.

Systems Thinking

Systems thinking is the practice of seeing concepts, objects, processes and curricular disciplines as interconnected systems in relationship with one another, rather than as isolated entities. This approach to teaching and learning engages students in noticing all that is going on around them and ultimately how everything is interconnected. Systems Thinking is often used as an entry point for Design Thinking, and Problem and Project Based Learning.

Academic Program

Language Arts

Wildwood's K–5 language arts program focuses on reading, writing, and word work as its three pillars. The curriculum is based on the reading and writing workshop model developed by Teachers College at Columbia University in New York. This focused approach ensures that each student develops the skills needed to excel as a reader, writer, speaker, and listener.

Our classroom libraries are filled with a range of children's favorites, including many Caldecott and Newbery award-winning books. Through read-alouds, guided reading, and book groups, children develop listening and comprehension skills and learn to express their ideas. "Thinking while reading" strategies are taught to build skills in predicting, visualizing, summarizing, and making inferences.

Grammar, spelling, and vocabulary are integrated as students master mechanics while writing for a variety of audiences and in a wide range of genres. The writing process includes pre-writing, revising, and publishing. Each student is encouraged to develop skills that lead to a lifelong love of reading while guided in developing a voice as a writer.

Social Studies

Children embark on a journey of discovery of our world in kindergarten, exploring their communities and considering their place within it. Our multicultural communities and country come into focus as children consider their homes and families, school and neighborhoods. Students learn to question and find answers by researching, building, reading, interviewing, writing, performing, and expanding their knowledge through field trips and excursions.

The curriculum spirals outward as children develop cognitively. The 2nd grade theme of "Our Coastal Community" focuses on the rewards and responsibilities of living near the coast. The city of Los Angeles—past and present—is at the center of 3rd grade studies. In 4th grade, students consider the diverse and great state of California, while 5th grade learning is focused on our nation's founding and growth. Throughout the social studies program, every child's curiosity and imagination is encouraged as their awareness grows around what it means to be an informed and engaged citizen.

Mathematics

Wildwood's mathematics program gives students a deep understanding of math concepts, emphasizing skills and strategies to solve problems in multiple ways. The curriculum makes math meaningful by connecting lessons and projects to everyday life and teachers focus a great deal on the idea of having a "growth-mindset" which is crucial for every student.

Our elementary curriculum utilizes the Think!Math program which is based in the Singapore approach as its primary resource and guide. The Think!Math program allows for the appreciation of children's intuitive mathematical thinking, emphasizes problem-solving, and builds mathematical understanding through a CPA approach. The CPA approach is a three-step process that takes children from concrete, to pictorial, then abstract mathematical understanding. Students first encounter the mathematical concepts through the use of manipulatives. They then move on to the pictorial stage in which pictures are used to model problems. When students are familiar with the ideas taught, they progress to a more advanced or abstract state in which only numbers, notations, and symbols are used. Concepts are addressed from a number of directions that challenge students to think and understand.

Kindergarten

Reading

Students are empowered to observe, interpret, and indeed read the world around them, fostering an understanding that reading happens both within and outside of books. Whether reading pictures or chapter books, our youngest students learn to choose books that are “just right” for them, and spend time with books daily. There are a number of modalities teachers use to help students strengthen phonological awareness, develop decoding strategies, deepen comprehension skills, and encourage rich conversations about literature. These include whole class targeted mini-lessons, followed by students practicing the skill or strategy taught; small group or one on one reading with a teacher; partner reading; and independent reading. In addition, read-alouds are a part of the kindergarten daily schedule. These picture and/or chapter books help build class community and encourage students to make predictions and connections. “Own-voices” books as well as diverse authors and perspectives are intentionally selected so students are engaging with books that serve as a reflection of the world around them.

Writing

Kindergarten writing begins with storytelling followed by putting pen to paper. The Story Workshop approach emerges from research that literacy and play are intrinsically linked. Story Workshop gives each student the opportunity to create stories using a variety of different materials, including clay, beads, oil pastels, paints, blocks, puppets, and dramatic play. Students are asked the essential questions, “Where do stories come from?” and “What materials will inspire you to tell your story?” Students are encouraged to play with materials and investigate elements of a story, including characters, setting, and plot. This leads to a deeper understanding that authors can tell their stories in myriad ways, and provides a springboard for students to transition to pictures, labels, or sentences to tell their tales. In short, they are empowered to see themselves as authors.

Each Writing Workshop session starts with a mini-lesson whereby a strategy is introduced. Examples include: matching pictures and words, adding details, and remembering spaces between words. The goal of each day’s mini-lesson is to provide support and a variety of entry points so that children can continue with their writing. Children spend their independent writing time developing writing pieces that they are passionate about while incorporating the strategies taught. Teachers also use the workshop time to meet with small groups of children who may need extra support or are ready to go beyond the day’s lesson. Throughout the year, children learn to write a variety of different genres such as personal narratives, information writing, opinion writing, and poetry.

Word Work

Primarily guided by the Wilson Foundations® program, our Word Work program in grades K-3 fosters an understanding of how print works in the English language. Foundations® is a multisensory and systematic phonics, spelling, and handwriting program that benefits all K-3 students. Children begin with an understanding of how the letters of the alphabet are constructed to form words and in turn how words are constructed to become sentences. Students develop phonetic awareness and learn to read high-frequency words. Multiple strategies are used to promote spelling such as word games, word sorts, phonics-based books, and rhyming. In addition to our Foundations® program, in which students build an understanding of letter-names and letter-sounds, work to sound out words using tapping and blending, and start building sentences, we also utilize Structured Word Inquiry to explore the meaning of words. Using Structured Word Inquiry, students learn how to use phonology, morphology, and etymology as tools to demystify and uncover the hidden truths of the English language. This approach helps students learn that everything in the English language is spelled the way it is for a reason. Throughout all word work lessons, children are encouraged to explore and play with language.

Social Studies

Students are exposed to two major units of study: Family and Home. These topics are organized around hands-on projects and inquiry. Through writing, art, dramatic play, interviews, block building, and discussion,

every child is encouraged to follow their interests and natural curiosity while gaining an understanding of the concepts of interdependence, communication, diversity, and the importance of relationships. Students explore the Anti-Bias Education Goals demonstrating “self-awareness, confidence, family pride, and positive social/group identities” as well as expressing “comfort and joy with human diversity.” Our study of family begins with the central questions “what makes a family a family?” and “who is in my family?”. Students explore family relationships and gain an appreciation and understanding for different family structures and who is in a family. Within this study, students explore ideas around who they belong with and where they belong. The concept of belonging leads into exploring the meaning of “home”. Students ask the central question, “where do I feel belonging?” as they explore homes. Social Studies projects and explorations are flexible and change with interests and excitements of the students in each classroom.

Math

The math curriculum reinforces concepts and essential skills relevant for this age, enhances student understanding of what is around them, and motivates children to explore and learn more. The year begins with an exploration of patterns and sorting and counting items. Students also learn to graph information that is gathered as they learn about one another. Students then move into learning about addition and subtraction story problems. Students are asked to explain their mathematical thinking and represent it visually. Teachers stress conceptual understanding over math-fact drills at this level. Practical applications are used in lesson presentations and word problems. In addition to the arithmetic operations, students learn ordinal numbers, 2D and 3D shapes, and length and measurement.

First Grade

Reading

Building off the foundations laid in kindergarten, reading instruction in 1st grade continues to be oriented around establishing lifelong reading habits. The workshop model continues to provide both direct instruction around specific reading strategies as well as opportunity for small group and independent reading times. Phonics continues to play a large part in the 1st grade curriculum, as does focus on comprehension skills, including retelling stories, describing characters, setting, and major events.

Writing

The Story Workshop approach emerges from research that literacy and play are intrinsically linked. Story Workshop gives each student the opportunity to create stories using a variety of different materials, including clay, beads, oil pastels, paints, blocks, puppets, and dramatic play. Students are asked the essential questions, “Where do stories come from?” and “What materials will inspire you to tell your story?” Students are encouraged to play with materials and investigate elements of a story, including characters, setting, and plot. Stories may take different forms, including fiction, personal narrative, and poetry. Following story creation, students capture their stories in writing.

As students develop conventions in writing, they participate in the more formal schoolwide Writer’s Workshop. Each workshop begins with a mini-lesson in which the teacher introduces a writing technique such as adding detail or suspense. Children spend their writing time attempting to apply strategies and skills learned from the daily mini-lessons. Each student has a writing folder where work in progress is kept so that children may add to and revise their work. At the end of each unit, children share finished pieces during an Author’s Writing Celebration.

Word Work

Primarily guided by the Wilson Foundations® program, our Word Work program in grades K-3 fosters an understanding of how print works in the English language. Foundations® is a multisensory and systematic phonics, spelling, and handwriting program that benefits all K-3 students. The Word Work program in First grade continues to foster and build an understanding of how print works in the English language. Moving onto

the next stage of the Wilson Foundations® program, children begin the year by reviewing how the letters of the alphabet are constructed to form words and how words are constructed to become sentences. Students continue to deepen their phonetic awareness and build their sight word, also known as “snap words,” knowledge. Multiple strategies are used to promote spelling such as word games, word sorts, phonics-based books, and word families.

Using Structured Word Inquiry, students learn how to use phonology, morphology, and etymology as tools to demystify and uncover the hidden truths of the English language. This approach helps students learn that everything in the English language is spelled the way it is for a reason. Throughout all word work lessons, children are encouraged to explore and play with language.

Social Studies

First grade students spend the year focusing on the themes of School and Friendship. Both of these topics are organized around hands-on projects, field trips, and inquiry. Each year is a little different based on the interest of the students in each class. Through writing, art, dramatic play, interviews, block building, and discussion, every child is encouraged to follow their interests and natural curiosity while gaining an understanding of the concepts of interdependence, communication, diversity, impact on the environment, and the importance of relationships.

Math

First graders begin the year with ways to count to 10, and within a short amount of time move into learning about and working with subtraction. Single-digit multiplication is introduced later in the year with division introduced very briefly immediately after. Students are not expected to memorize multiplication facts yet. Teachers stress conceptual understanding over math-fact drill at this level. Practical applications are used in lesson presentation and word problems. In addition to the arithmetic operations, this first level teaches ordinal numbers, shapes, measurement, time telling, money, and graphs.

Second Grade

Reading

In the beginning of the year, 2nd graders focus on building good reading habits. Reading skills are taught in a range of forums, including whole class mini-lessons, small skill-based reading groups, and individually through student-teacher conferences. Second graders learn the value of talking about books in ways that support and ensure comprehension. Students begin using reading logs in 2nd grade. This introduction to homework encourages each child to be responsible for their daily reading. New books are selected on Mondays and returned on Fridays along with reading logs.

Writing

In second grade, students learn to write with growing independence. They are encouraged to create a greater volume of writing and to revise, rethink, and rewrite with greater fluency. In selected reading and writing exercises, students explore qualities of good writing, including various crafts and writer’s tools, as well as more fundamental ones, including structure, focus, and detail. Units of study include narrative writing, writing with authors as mentors, writing and revising realistic fiction, expert projects, writing to learn and teach about a topic of personal expertise, and poetry. Technology is integrated into writing using iPads as an invaluable tool for a storytelling project.

Word Work

In second grade, students continue onto Tier 2 of the Wilson Foundations® program. Second graders focus on and deepen skills around letter formation, phonological and phonemic awareness, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension strategies, and written composition (spelling and handwriting). Skill instruction is integrated in a way where daily lessons teach and then reinforce corresponding skills. Word work lessons are designed to

scaffold the learning while teaching important skills explicitly, sequentially, and systematically. The Wilson Foundations program actively engages students in learning through the use of multisensory techniques and provides multiple opportunities for skills practice and application to build mastery.

Social Studies

The 2nd grade social studies curriculum focuses on the idea of community and is guided by the essential questions, "What systems does a community need to thrive?" Students explore the systems within our school community then branch out and study the systems within our school's neighborhood and communities around the world. They explore the relationships between human-made and nature-made systems and quickly begin to see and learn how everything is interconnected. Second graders dive into a yearlong journey to discover how trade, geography, transportation, and sustainability systems are connected. They explore work/jobs, food/resources, and recreation, all parts of our larger community systems. Students consider how geography affects our everyday lives. Nearby walking field trips as well as field trips out in the broader community help deepen their understanding. Children welcome guest speakers, participate in group projects, discussions, block building, reading, writing, gardening, and art experiences. Service learning projects also reflect curricular themes and help to deepen and bring meaning and purpose to their learning.

Math

Continuing on with the Think!Math program, 2nd grade students begin to focus on addition and subtraction fact fluency by exploring doubles, combinations of 10, adding on from 10, near doubles, making 10s, and pretending a 10. Within their multiplication fact fluency practice they work with times 2, times 10, and times 5, as well as squares, doubling or halving, adding or subtracting groups of numbers, and breaking numbers apart. Students also work with renaming (carrying and borrowing), multiplication and division, place value, measurement, money, introduction of fractions, writing numbers in words, time telling, graphs, and very introductory geometric shapes and area.

Third Grade

Reading

The 3rd grade reading curriculum includes standards and skills related to fluency, decoding, comprehension, and vocabulary. Third graders also practice responding to reading verbally and in writing. Reading competency is accomplished through shared reading, guided reading, self-selected reading, and phonics instruction. Reading comprehension skills are deepened in 3rd grade as literacy is increasingly critical in mastering concepts across all subjects. Students participate in book groups in which they engage in collaborative discussions about shared texts. In book groups, students make text-to-text, text-to-self, and text-to-world connections. Students learn summarization skills and make predictions and inferences. Lessons and assignments provide opportunities to practice literary analysis to deepen their reading experience.

Writing

With a focus on personal narrative, poetry, persuasive, and informational writing, students learn to write coherent and cohesive pieces of writing. They first learn to write a complete paragraph with a main idea, supporting sentences, and a conclusion. Students gain a deeper understanding of the writing process using prewriting strategies and creating a rough draft, an edited and revised draft, and a final draft. Using a range of writing techniques such as similes, metaphors, dialogue, personification, and snapshots, students discover their own writer's voice and enhance their writing style.

Word Work

Word Work in 3rd grade is partially guided primarily by Wilson's Foundations® program, focusing on foundational word study skills including students' understanding of the nature and uses of print and that written language carries meaning. They build phonological and phonemic awareness to identify and manipulate units of oral language-parts such as words and syllables. Phonics and word study includes practice with high-frequency

words, the ability to recognize the relationship between letters (graphemes), sounds (phonemes), and letter patterns, spelling, handwriting skills, and vocabulary. Third graders also build on word investigation skills using Structured Word Inquiry.

Social Studies

The heart of the Social Studies curriculum is the study of Los Angeles, covering its early history and its growth into the bustling metropolis it has become. Students' work is guided by essential questions such as, "How are places and people connected?" and "How can city-systems support the best lives possible for all its residents?" Third graders examine how past and present systems contribute to what is happening in their city, the country, and the world today. Beginning with the physical environment of the Los Angeles Basin and then exploring why people move from place to place, students explore the lives of early inhabitants and then learn about the different groups of people who arrived and settled here after them. Students consider intent and impact as they examine the encounters of various groups of people. Third graders also explore identity and belonging and practice multiple perspective thinking with a focus on the two 3rd grade multicultural themes: Nationality & Immigration and Language. Field trips connected to our curriculum enhance the classroom learning by providing hands-on experiences that widen the lens to better view the history of our city and the people in it.

Math

In 3rd grade, students continue to develop skills within the following units: number sense, place value, rounding, estimation, adding and subtracting with regrouping, multiplication, division, word problems, fractions, and measurement. Throughout the math curriculum, students continue to strengthen their problem solving skills and strategies. They demonstrate their learning in multiple ways including the use of illustrations and various technology tools, utilization of manipulatives, and by engaging in meaningful projects related to math concepts. Strategies are explored and practiced in both small and large group instruction. Students reflect on their own knowledge by comparing and contrasting their answers with their peers. By the end of the year, the goal for each 3rd grade student is to master fluency in basic computation, gain an understanding of which mathematical operation to use in a word or multistep problem, and have the ability to use mathematical reasoning to solve problems. They learn to communicate their mathematical thinking in writing and verbally.

Fourth Grade

Reading

Students continue to develop active reading skills. Reading for information is emphasized as students build the skills to research subjects in depth. Students focus on note taking, highlighting, summarizing, and using tables of contents, bibliographies, and glossaries. Students read expository and reference texts as well as favorites by Sharon Creech, Kate DiCamillo, and Sid Fleischman. Themes of California are explored in the genres of memoir, historical fiction, and poetry. Book groups are increasingly student led as students deepen their ability to formulate and express ideas clearly.

Writing

Students continue to work along the Lucy Calkins writer's workshop framework to explore approaches to writing such as poetry, fiction, personal narratives, descriptive writing, and a variety of styles of non-fiction. Writing assignments often connect to our social studies curriculum as students synthesize information and write from a range of perspectives representing the people who inhabit California. Students will focus on elements of historical fiction as well as informational writing through research and stories from multiple perspectives throughout history. Each student also writes a formal research paper engaging with print and web-based resources. They learn how to write introductory, supporting, and concluding paragraphs, and the importance of including important details such as bibliographies and supporting illustrations.

Word Work

Students begin the year exploring the word "orthography," which leads to an important discussion about the

study of words. Next, students learn about the components of structured word inquiry; Morphology, Etymology, and Phonology. Structured Word Inquiry (SWI or WI) activities throughout the year include word sorts, in-and-out puzzles, and word sums. In addition to SWI, 4th graders review a number of language conventions including homophones, homonyms, synonyms and antonyms. Students are also assessed on the Elementary Spelling Inventory (ESI), which covers sample features of the letter name–alphabetic to derivational relations stages.

Social Studies

Launched by the essential question, “What happens when two cultures meet?” Fourth graders consider the beauty and diversity of California’s people, history, land, and animals through the lens of our DEIB and Multicultural themes of appearance, ethnicity, race, and anti-racism. The beginning of our Social Studies curriculum focuses on building skills that aid students in their future curricular work completing both independent and collaborative projects. Students practice necessary skills through a series of systems-thinking and design-thinking tasks that tie into our larger state study of California. Students begin the year within the local community before exploring the California National Parks system, Pacific Ocean system, and then finally, a student-chosen Passion Project. From there, areas of study cover California’s history and begin with the first Californians with a focus on the Chumash before moving chronologically onto European Explorers, the Mexican Rancho Period, The Gold Rush, Chinese Immigration, and The Old West. A culminating project example is the “Who am I” project done in collaboration with the Visual Arts team and inspired in part by Brazilian artist Angela Dass’ project Humanae. Dass’ work is a reflection on human uniqueness and diversity that places subjects from around the world against a background tinted with a color tone identical to a sample of 11 × 11 pixels taken from their nose and matched with the industrial Pantone pallet. Students create their own skin tone background in Visual Arts, and use it as the backdrop to their own photo and completed in conjunction with in class writing.

Math

Focusing on five main units of study, this year progresses through place value, numbers and operations, patterns, functions and change, geometry, and data analysis and probability. Fourth graders continue to develop multiple strategies to solve problems and spend a great deal of time explaining their thinking with one another. Students learn all four functions with both fractions and decimals. Geometry coverage is also very advanced as students compute the degrees of angles and solve complex area and perimeter questions. Students work with advanced whole number concepts (e.g., factors, multiples, rounding off), money, other geometric concepts, graphs, and averages. Two-digit multipliers are introduced at this level. Students complete computation problems and the number of word problems gradually increases at this level.

Fifth Grade

As students explore themes of “identity” throughout the course of the year, they read and write and present in a range of genres, including prose, poetry, and persuasive writing with the goal of becoming increasingly confident, thoughtful readers and expressive, versatile writers.

Reading

The gradual shift toward more advanced comprehension and analytical thinking continues. In book groups and independently, students read from a wide range of genres and practice comprehension skills through a variety of strategies, such as identifying the theme, making connections, drawing conclusions, analyzing text, and recognizing common literary elements (plot, characters, setting, conflict, and resolution). The reading-writing connection is made as students annotate and write reading responses. Writing skills are developed with guided analysis and modeling of distinguished authors’ styles. As literature is increasingly integrated with social studies themes, emphasis is placed on the following:

- Historical fiction: looking at changes in identity over time with a particular look at gender roles in Colonial American history
- Author studies: How does an author create a character’s identity?

- Multicultural studies: stereotypes, multiple perspectives, and “unlearning” with a lens on ways one is able, less able, or differently abled

Throughout the year, students are expected to read every day and are required to practice reading aloud to increase fluency and improve oral presentation skills. Fifth grade students may serve on the annual Wildwood Medal Committee. In this much-loved tradition, students decide which of the five nominated books should be awarded the Wildwood Medal based on literary merit and effective portrayal of the Life Skills. The optional Wildwood Medal program provides passionate readers the opportunity to challenge themselves in a fun, collaborative, and meaningful way.

Writing

Fifth graders write for various audiences and purposes across the curriculum. Students write daily, often responding to a prompt, a sentence “stem,” a photo, a current event, or a poem of the day. Larger assignments require students to follow the full writing process of prewriting, revising, and producing a final draft. Student work is shared and celebrated in many ways: haiku at the Poetry Museum, monologues accompanying their handmade masks at the visual arts exhibition, or letters to their congressperson regarding the needs of disabled people.

Word Work

Word Work in 5th grade asks students to be word scientists, calling them to ask questions, create hypotheses, test those ideas, and come to conclusions about their wonderings through the Word Inquiry process. Students hypothesize about word meaning, origin, and structure. Literacy lessons include a weekly sentences study based in a mentor text where students notice grammar, punctuation, literary devices, phonics, spelling, and sentence structure.

Specialists

Science

The goal of the Wildwood science program is to incubate curiosity, help children identify themselves as scientists, and guide their understanding that science is a way to solve problems and make positive change in our world. Learning how to think and act like a scientist is fundamental in the elementary years. By engaging in activities that build scientific skills, children first learn how to make observations using their senses. As the years progress, children test ideas, share and work with other scientists in their class, and learn how to record and interpret data. Students learn that the scientific method is not always a linear, step-by-step formula. Rather, it is a flexible process that involves asking questions, researching and learning from experts, revising ideas, and using those revisions to ask more questions.

Kindergarten

Science in kindergarten focuses on developing a fascination and curiosity for the world around us. Students engage in hands-on activities and projects all year long. We start the year in our garden, learning about living things and their habitats. We end the year learning about forces, gravity through roller coaster design, creating boats to float down our arroyo, and finding formulas to give a helium balloon neutral buoyancy.

First Grade

First grade students go more in-depth classifying and observing. Students begin in the garden, investigating the different needs of living things. First graders study senses and how they are used to make observations and collect data. They also learn about the water cycle, how plants support each other, and the pollination system. In the Spring students demonstrate their knowledge by designing and building hand-pollinators for Wildwood flowers. We end the year exploring chain reactions and making Rube Goldberg machines!

Second Grade

Second grade students practice applying their scientific knowledge to sustainable ideas. Students learn about the properties of matter by finding a new life for old crayons, acids and bases through soil samples of our garden beds, discover the electromagnetic spectrum and use it to create devices to harness a bit of our sun's power. Second grade students use their understanding of gases to investigate sound waves and end the year carbonating sodas for philanthropic causes.

Third-Fifth Grade Science

Each grade level focuses on a different science domain. Through these domains, students learn disciplinary content or core ideas, engaging in science and engineering practices (these are behaviors that scientists engage in as they investigate and build models and theories about the natural world), and practicing crosscutting concepts like cause and effect, patterns, scale, systems, and system models.

Third Grade

The 3rd grade science curriculum builds on the basic skills students learned in the primaries. The scientific process is a particular focus. In their first unit of study, students unpack common stereotypes about scientists and define what they have in common. Third graders investigate and practice the process of inquiry using a flowchart model developed by the University of California, Berkeley. They use it to trace the development of scientific ideas, stressing two important concepts: most questions are not answered through a linear checklist and the process of science never really ends. Subsequent units of study have a life science emphasis and include investigations into animal adaptations, the energy cycle, and ecosystems. Third graders culminate the year working to deeply understand their local ecosystems, applying a systems thinking lens, and identifying actions to preserve and protect them. Project work emphasizes the interconnectivity of all systems and the real impact that students can have in their communities.

Fourth Grade

Fourth graders continue to develop their understanding and application of scientific thinking and the scientific method through the study of Earth and Space Sciences. The curriculum presents a foundation for geology including the study of Earth's structure, plate boundaries and plate tectonics, earthquakes, minerals, weathering and erosion, and the rock cycle. Students are also introduced to astronomy with a concentration on our solar system. Topics covered include the basic organization of our universe and where our galaxy and solar system fit into that structure, learning about and distinguishing between the objects found in our solar system, movement of celestial bodies, measuring and modeling size and distances in space, the structure and composition of the planets. Students simulate astronomers' work by investigating the properties of the planets in our solar system. They boost their learning by applying knowledge in novel ways—crafting travel guides for future planetary travelers that combine science facts and science fiction in a culminating research project.

Fifth Grade

Fifth grade students refine their skills in scientific thinking through the study of Physical Sciences. An introduction to chemistry begins the year with a focus on the Periodic Table, atoms and molecules, physical/chemical properties, and simple chemical reactions. CER (claim, evidence, reasoning) is a writing strategy that can develop a student's analytical thinking and argumentative writing skills to turn that "I don't know" into "aha, so that's why we got those results in the lab. Students apply this scientific writing strategy to chemistry labs the answer questions like:

- Is the lava lamp experiment an example of a physical or chemical change?
- Is Frankenstein's Hand a chemical change?
- Do all of the substances tested react with water?
- Can we use our knowledge of physical and chemical properties to identify a mystery spill?

The next units of study focus on Newton's laws of motion, simple machines, mechanisms, and electricity. Fifth graders apply the theories they have studied to design, construct, and test simple machines, mechanisms, and electrically powered cars. Students finish the year by studying the anatomy of plant and animal cells. Students learn the parts of a microscope and go on to use microscopes to create diagrams of specimens and solve a forensic mystery.

Visual Arts

The Wildwood School Elementary Visual Arts program promotes confidence and understanding of materials and artistic fundamentals through guided discoveries and learned techniques. Students are encouraged to exercise their skills to express their own interests and ideas. Each child is challenged to closely observe, experiment, and approach the creative process with enthusiasm. Art history and application from antiquity to the contemporary period are paramount in the various curricula. The incorporation of Design Thinking, Systems Thinking and Wildwood's DEIB work also contribute to the foundation of the Visual Arts ethos at Wildwood School. Each student has their own sketchbook to document their learning, a place to discover ideas, interests, and take notes.

Kindergarten

In kindergarten students are exposed to a wide variety of materials and art tools. They are given opportunities to explore mediums in different ways. The goal is to develop an excitement for approaches to art-making while connecting with other specialist disciplines and their classroom learning around the themes of family structure and home. Students explore media such as paint, clay, collage work, drawing, and construction. Students begin the year orienting themselves with the basic guidelines and systems of the art studio, learning how to use their sketchbooks, and discussing their artistic hopes and dreams for the year. Children's literature, material exploration, and art techniques are entry points to foster inspiration and development.

First Grade

First grade students further develop techniques, vocabulary, and the systems for paint, clay, collage work, drawing, and construction. Students begin the year revisiting the basic guidelines and systems of the art studio, diving back into their sketchbook practice, and discussing their artistic hopes and dreams. Children's literature, material exploration, and art techniques are entry points to foster inspiration and development. First grade artists create artwork that connects with other specialist disciplines and their classroom learning around the themes of school, friendship, and gender.

Second Grade

Second graders learn about various art genres and artists in history including portraiture, abstract art, observational drawing, mixed media design principles, and ceramics. Second grade artists gain experience working with clay techniques and designing three dimensional works of art from recycled materials. Second grade artists practice observational drawing skills through portraiture and revisit principles of primary and secondary color mixing. Children's literature, historical and contemporary artists, personal interests, and art techniques are entry points to foster inspiration for artwork and skill development. Artists create artwork that connects with other specialist disciplines and their classroom learning around the theme of ability and age.

Third Grade

Third grade artists employ a variety of media to tell stories about the Wildwood community. Inspired by the work of Andy Goldsworthy the students collect organic material like pebbles and sticks to assemble miniature "earth artworks." Exploring the relationship between technology and art, the Third Graders capture a flora specimen using both photography and drawing skills. Observation or "looking," is a skill the students delve into deeply. They will use microscopes, both digital and analog, to examine the specimen from an alternative perspective. The skill of observation is explored further during a community photography project, during which the artists endeavor to tell stories about their community through photography. It is important to note that the 3rd grade curriculum is learned through the lens of "workflow." Workflow can be described as the system of work, but in the classroom we think of it as what it takes to see a project through from inception to reflection. For our purposes workflow is divided into three phases: Ideation, Production, and Reflection. These phases, much like the stages of project based learning, are cyclical in nature. The artists do not study these notions conceptually per se, but the phases create an awareness of their experience within any given project.

Fourth Grade

Fourth graders explore less traditional art forms, from the Dada movement to post-minimalism. With inspiration from the work of Sol Lewitt and Joseph Kosuth, students explore the significance of the process as art. The artists focus on conceptual art, with an emphasis on the *idea* as the work of art, as opposed to the final product. During the Suminagashi marbling unit, the artists learned a new method of printmaking. This method uses water as opposed to rubber or wood, as the means of ink application. They continue to develop their ceramic faculties both on and off the pottery wheel, and take painterly approaches to glazing. They ask questions like: "How can I communicate my idea in the most effective way?" "Can my art provoke an emotional response in the viewer?" and "Can art affect change?" It is important to note that this curriculum is learned through the lens of "workflow." Workflow can be described as the system of work, but in the classroom we think of it as what it takes to see a project through from inception to reflection. For our purposes workflow is divided into three phases: Ideation, Production, and Reflection. These phases, much like the stages of project based learning, are cyclical in nature. The artists do not study these notions conceptually per se, but the phases create an awareness of their experience within any given project.

Fifth Grade

Fifth grade students are exposed to representational and realistic approaches to the human form through paint, clay, and studio drawing. The artists learn alternative approaches to painting techniques and use non-traditional art materials. Moreover, they delve deeply into technique, learning about the facial diagram as well as value and tone. Artists have opportunities to plan, create and execute independent study. Moreover, they tell more complex and personal stories during a collaborative studio photography unit. Students develop

knowledge in independent pottery wheel use. It is important to note that this curriculum is learned through the lens of “workflow.” Workflow can be described as the system of work, but in the classroom we think of it as what it takes to see a project through from inception to reflection. For our purposes workflow is divided into three phases: Ideation, Production, and Reflection. These phases, much like the stages of project based learning, are cyclical in nature. The artists do not study these notions conceptually per se, but the phases create an awareness of their experience within any given project.

Performing Arts

Kindergarten

In Performing Arts, the kindergarten students are introduced to many different musical and theatrical experiences aimed at enhancing and enriching their performance aptitude. The kindergarten performing arts program supports and challenges students' intellectual, social, emotional, creative, and physical growth. Students will gain skills in singing, listening, creating, speaking, moving, playing instruments, and dancing. Through the use of drama games and creative movement, students will use their imaginations to create stories. They will explore body expression, voice expression, and feeling expression while communicating and connecting to others.

First Grade

First grade students are introduced to the basics of theatricality. Students learn how to become confident risk takers in oration by practicing vocal projection. Through the use of drama games, creative movement, choreography, puppetry, and poetry, they begin to form the base of performing arts skills that will lay the foundation for future years of dramatic exploration. Students use their imaginations to participate in movement stories. Each class will learn the process of putting on a story play in addition to being introduced to the stage. Students participate in the beginning use of instrumental music and learn to play and clap rhythmic pattern notation. They explore percussion instruments and Boomwhackers to begin their learning of music theory and music appreciation.

Second Grade

The 2nd grade students build on the fundamental skills they acquired in 1st grade. Their imaginations are the driving force of all performing art play and development. They learn how to become more confident speakers, how to better control their vocal projection and stage diction. Through the use of drama games, creative movement, choreography, puppetry, poetry, and theatrical critique, they continue to expand upon their performing arts skills. Students continue their learning of music theory by studying tempo and emphasizing a steady beat. They learn basic body percussion and create original patterns to share with the class.

Third Grade

In Performing Arts, the 3rd grade students build on the fundamental skills of music, movement, and theater arts that they acquired in second grade. Students begin to concentrate on more advanced public speaking skills such as intonation, volume control, and eye contact. Through the use of drama games, creative movement, choreography, poetry, and theatrical critique, students continue to expand upon their performing arts skills. In addition, students create an original puppet character and use this character to explore scene work and monologues. Puppet theater is shared amongst the grade, showcasing their ability to create an original character, write a scene, and act in front of an audience. Students also learn how to use the art of mime to become silent storytellers. The 3rd grade moves as one, learning social dances. Not only do they learn about choreographers but they also learn about choreographer's inspiration when creating movement sequences. The 3rd grade is introduced to specific musical concepts through musical games, instrumental exploration, and worldly songs. Music Theory and the Orff pedagogy is studied and applied as students use xylophones and hand bells to create songs and patterns. Students sing in unison, in rounds, and learn how to use American Sign Language to share lyrics of songs.

Fourth Grade

In Performing Arts, the 4th graders continue to dig deeper into acting, music, and movement. Students explore an actor's process by exploring the acting concepts of *objective*, *action*, and *intentions*. They develop body movement and language, strengthen voice control, eye contact, and show clear facial expressions to show emotion. Through acting workshop, students learn various acting exercises, working on emotions, physicality, and intention. In addition, students work together to produce and perform short plays that focus on character perspectives from famous fairy tales. Through *Rhythms* work, fourth graders move their bodies to the rhythm of music. They explore balance, moving in straight and curved lines, and make shapes with their bodies. They make the connection between poetry and movement, choreographing movement to written words. They perform their movements as an ensemble. Students also learn to play the ukulele in class. Through folk music and worldly songs, students study music theory and apply their learning to the way they strum and pluck the instrument.

Fifth Grade

The 5th grade applies the word "create" to all aspects of performing. Students will learn to play the ukulele in class. Along with learning music theory, proper strumming and plucking technique, and playing known folk and popular songs, students will work in groups to write original songs that connect to their work in helping our school and community. Students will create original characters all stemming from a chosen hat. These characters will develop rich backstories, personalized body movements, and specific character voices. Students will experience being directors, producers, writers, stage designers, costume designers, and light and sound engineers as they engage in theater arts creative process. They will create films that incorporate production systems and theater skills acquired from previous years. Fifth graders will culminate by acting, singing, and dancing in a musical production which is shared with a live audience.

Physical Education

Wildwood's physical education program promotes the use of Life Skills to help children develop physical and social skills and a lifelong love for healthy physical activity. The program's four essential components are reinforced through play and practice:

- Sportsmanship – Each student learns positive social behavior through movement and interaction with others.
- Physical fitness – Students learn to develop and maintain the best possible level of performance, understanding, and appreciation for physical fitness.
- Skill acquisition – Each student learns specific skills, such as throwing, catching, striking, and kicking.
- Self-image – Students develop a positive self-image that includes awareness and understanding of one's body, the use of the body as a means of expression, and the body as an instrument for self-realization.

Kindergarten, First, and Second Grades

Physical education classes begin with warm-up activities. Jogging, jumping rope, parachute games, tumbling, and dance activities build aerobic and anaerobic endurance. Games designed to develop physical skills that include agility, balance, object manipulation, spatial awareness, directionality, and creative movement are enjoyed in large and small groups. Foundational sports skills of jumping; catching and throwing; kicking, trapping and dribbling; and volleying and striking are learned in a fun, noncompetitive atmosphere. All partner and group play is supervised to help children develop positive personal skills, self-esteem, and ease in cooperative social situations.

Third, Fourth, and Fifth Grades

As children develop, games and sports help in refining fundamental skills and learning the specialized skills, rules, and strategies needed to play soccer, volleyball, flag football, basketball, field hockey, softball, and other sports. Sportsmanship and collaborative team play are emphasized. Cooperative games help students

build relationships, enhance communication skills, and provide opportunities to work together and solve challenges.

All P.E. activities focus on the five components of health-related fitness: aerobic capacity, muscular strength, muscular endurance, flexibility, and body composition. Children learn to set and maintain physical fitness goals and develop a positive attitude about leading an active and healthy lifestyle.

Health

Wildwood's health curriculum lays the foundation for each child's goal of physical well-being. Our health curriculum helps students become good decision-makers with healthy goals when faced with lifestyle choices. The health program consists of the following components:

- Physical health – The health of the developing body
- Mental and emotional health – The health of the mind, including feelings and thoughts
- Social health – Relationships with other people, including family and friends

Through discussions and activities, students develop Life Skills and tools to lead healthy lives. These skills include decision-making, goal setting, how to obtain help, stress management, refusal skills, and conflict resolution. By developing these skills, students enhance their self-esteem and their ability to be effective communicators, critical thinkers, respectful citizens, and responsible and health-conscious individuals.

Topics include the following:

- Life Skills
- Conflict resolution
- Nutrition
- Substance abuse prevention (presented in an age-appropriate manner)
- Safety
- Fitness
- Mindfulness

Library Resources

Wildwood's cozy library is a place where all are welcome and the joy of reading is fostered. Students have access to the library during their scheduled classes, as well as, throughout the day including Big Yard where they can curl up with a good book. Students are also invited to check out books to take home. The library is also available for support on in-depth classroom research projects. The focus of these sessions is to help students locate, evaluate, and effectively use information from multiple sources, both on and offline.

Students participate in the California Young Reader Medal. The CYRM is a program where participating California schools read the same five books and vote on which should win. After all five books are read, an election is held with decorations and voting booths. Discussions take place around how the process of how voting works, why it is important, and how every vote counts.

Kindergarten-Second Grade

Story time is an opportunity for children to visit the library with their class and listen to a curated set of picture books that celebrate cultural diversity, global citizenship, and reinforce the Wildwood life skills. Elements of the story are explored including key details, characters, setting, major events, and multiple points of view. The love of reading is at the forefront of these visits and students are able to check out books that they are passionate about.

Third Grade

Students become independent library users by learning about the Dewey Decimal System and how most libraries are organized globally. The Dewey Decimal System is currently used in over 135 countries and students research libraries from around the world. Not only are they able to find a book in our school library, but they can also walk into most libraries and search using this same system.

Students explore what it means to be a responsible Internet user through Internet Safety and Digital Citizenship. Our 3rd graders do a variety of activities to help them learn about the importance of protecting their privacy online, how to behave ethically online, and how to be discerning about media messaging.

Fourth Grade

Students learn how to strategically search online, distinguishing between misinformation, advertisements, and credible sources. They will use these search skills to evaluate various websites and articles to discern their validity, also giving credit to creators when using their work. Students continue to build their digital citizenship competencies with an emphasis on appropriate use of social media and how to manage their digital footprint.

Fifth Grade

Students continue to participate in activities to further their understanding and responsibility of being a contemporary media user. Our 5th graders build on their knowledge of internet literacy, questioning their sources and the intent or bias behind these messages.

A highlight of the 5th grade library program is the Wildwood Medal. The Wildwood Medal is our own student-driven award given to a children's fiction book that is chosen by Wildwood 5th graders. This is an optional program for students who have a deep interest in reading and love to talk about books with others.

Technology

Technology at Wildwood is not seen as a separate subject area but rather as an essential and integrated tool that supports and enriches the curriculum. Students are encouraged to experiment, explore, create, and collaborate in a supportive environment. Technology at Wildwood is ever-changing, ever-growing, and always evolving.

The Tec D.E.C. is a place for students to discover, explore, and create. The space design breaks from the traditional media lab and can be transformed to meet specific technology needs including (but not limited to) video production (including green screen effects), 3D design and printing, building, robotics, and tinkering. The Tec D.E.C. serves as a resource to support classroom teachers as students tackle design thinking challenges.

The Educational Technology Department works closely with classroom teachers and specialists to integrate technology into the curriculum in an appropriate and meaningful way. With flexible scheduling, coaches are able to see students in a manner that best supports a current project or area of study.

Kindergarten and 1st grade students visit the Tec D.E.C. on a regular basis, helping to build a foundation of technology skills. As students move through the grades, the reinforcement of skills previously taught as well as introduction of new skills are planned with intention and purpose. The following is a sampling of activities and topics the students experience (by grade level).

Kindergarten and First Grade

Students are introduced to coding, robotics, and design thinking. Some activities might include using literature as an anchor to introduce technology concepts. Students are tasked with using technology or design thinking to help storybook characters overcome obstacles.

Second Grade

Students create stop-motion films using Lego, experiment with the green screen, and develop coding skills while learning to program robots. Students engage in hands-on Design Thinking and Systems Thinking projects tied to the 2nd grade curriculum. Many of these projects incorporate screen-free, non-digital technology, whereas others might include thoughtful, intentional use of digital technology.

Third Grade

Students incorporate their own voice and other audio into digital projects. They learn how to gather research and continue to work in Google Docs and Slides. Students also dive deeper into coding, robotics, filmmaking (including stop motion and green screen), and storytelling. Students engage in hands-on Design Thinking and Systems Thinking projects tied to the 3rd grade curriculum. Many of these projects incorporate screen-free, non-digital technology, whereas others might include thoughtful, intentional use of digital technology.

Fourth Grade

Students continue to use technology for research and to demonstrate their classroom learning. Students continue to build their content creation skills using green screen and stop motion. Students are introduced to Hummingbird Microcontrollers and TinkerCad (3D Printing design program). Students also engage in hands-on Design Thinking and Systems Thinking projects tied to the 4th grade curriculum. Many of these projects incorporate screen-free, non-digital technology, whereas others might include thoughtful, intentional use of digital technology.

Fifth Grade

Students use technology to prepare for success in middle school. Students use productivity tools such as Google Docs to collaborate with teachers and peers in real time. Students also begin to transition from block-based coding to text-based coding languages such as Javascript and Apple Swift Playgrounds (and use this knowledge to operate drones). Fifth graders use Piper Kits to physically build and program a computer. The Piper Kit uses a blueprint to guide the physical building of the computer, and Minecraft to drive the programming.

Students also engage in hands-on Design Thinking and Systems Thinking projects tied to the 5th grade curriculum. Many of these projects incorporate screen-free, non-digital technology, whereas others might include thoughtful, intentional use of digital technology.

Outside of the Classroom Learning Opportunities

Community Jobs

Each grade level at the elementary campus is responsible for a Community Job as a way to give back and take care of our school. How students approach their job is decided upon each year, allowing each group of students to make it their own.

Kindergarten – School Garden

Helping our school garden grow and thrive. Kindergarteners lead in the taking care of our school garden and deliver fresh harvests to classrooms and community.

First Grade – Lost and Found

Helping to return belongings to our community. First graders spend the year managing the lost and found by collecting and returning items to community members as well as sharing ideas on how to keep from misplacing things in the first place.

Second Grade – The School Post Office

Helping our Community Stay Connected. Second graders launch a post office each year allowing community members to send each other notes and important messages all year long.

Third Grade – Community Documentarians

Observing, inquiring, and documenting what is happening within our community. Third graders spend the year capturing all that is going on around campus and sharing it out via All School Meeting, the 2nd grade Post Office or through our 4th grade news reporters.

Fourth Grade – School News Reporters

Delivering important news and announcements to our community. After collecting important news from the 3rd grade documentarians, 4th graders decide how they should go about sharing what they learn with the community.

Fifth Grade – School Ambassadors

Making sure everyone at Wildwood feels welcome, comfortable, and has a sense of belonging. As leaders of the elementary campus, 5th graders have the important responsibility of being role models to younger students and helping to make sure our campus feels like a welcoming and inclusive space for all.

Community Involvement

Community involvement at the elementary campus takes place within classrooms through meaningful projects connected to student learning as well as schoolwide through our Student Community Involvement Team. Community involvement projects range in size, impact, and location. All community involvement endeavors focus on reciprocal learning and creating relationships with people, organizations, and the environment.

Advisory – Fifth Grade

Wildwood School believes Advisory is essential for student success. Our Advisory program begins in 5th grade and continues through senior year. Like all classes, Advisory offers a structured curriculum that integrates academic support, peer bonding and team building, multicultural programs, community involvement, and activities designed to enhance higher-level thinking and communication skills.

Advisory classes are led by teachers who serve as students' mentors, advocates, and primary links between

home and school. The small group setting encourages the development of supportive relationships with peers and adults who students grow to know well and can trust. Advisory becomes a safe space where kids try out new ideas and explore their own identities. In the process, they cultivate a sense of self—academically, emotionally, and socially.

With a focus on relationships and exchange of ideas, one of the primary objectives of Advisory is to provide students with a comfortable place to engage in thoughtful—and often lively—discussions about national and world events. Guided by their advisor, students learn to share their thoughts, listen to others' opinions, analyze sources, and respect differing points of view.

Part of the Advisory curriculum focuses on learning about and participating in local community involvement projects, both on campus and at local social-service agencies. Projects are age appropriate and selected to demonstrate to students what they can give and gain as they become aware of a range of community needs in human services and environmental stewardship.

Enrichment

A rich array of fun learning experiences are offered each trimester through the After School Enrichment program. Classes are designed for kindergarteners through 5th graders and reserved for current Wildwood students only.

Weekly courses range from physical activities, arts, experimental science, technology, and literature. Classes are taught by Wildwood faculty, alumni, and respected outside teachers and organizations. Class offerings are published at the beginning of the school year, in the winter, and in the spring. There is a fee for each course, and online registration is required. K-12 class offerings range from Mandarin to drawing and design, from beginning keyboard to aquatic science explorations. Enrichment classes meet once a week for one hour; there are a total of eight meetings per class.