



# Waldorf School of Lexington

## Grade Five Curriculum Standards

### Overview

Fifth graders arrive at a balance in the middle years of childhood. Development of the individual as separate from the world is acknowledged in a new verse that is spoken each morning. Now it is possible to direct the gaze outward into the world while becoming ever more conscious of the world within.

Looking outward, fifth graders observe the world of plants. With roots firmly anchored and leaves reaching out to the light, the plant stands in harmonious balance between earth and sun. Botany lessons include time outdoors experiencing plant life through the seasons, observing the diversity of the plant kingdom. Artistic work enhances science studies with ever more precise drawings. Skills acquired in watercolor painting can evoke the changing moods of nature in different climate zones.

In mathematics fifth graders gain proficiency in working with whole numbers, fractions, and mixed numbers. Properties and number patterns discovered in the lower grades are understood when fifth graders look at prime numbers, abundance, factors, and prime factors. Decimals are introduced. Form drawing moves into freehand geometric drawing, an introduction to geometry.

Fifth graders write on main lesson themes and life experiences. They edit papers for capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. Parts of speech, verb tenses, active and passive voices of a verb are presented. Letter writing is introduced, perhaps with the assignment to request information for a research paper. Dictations and spelling lists are part of the weekly rhythm in fifth grade.

Geography lessons focus on the continent of North America. Students begin to work with geographical terms. They look at different regions and hear stories about how inhabitants make a living off the land. Fifth graders welcome the challenge to learn the names of mountain ranges, rivers, and lakes, as well as some of the state capitals.

Fifth grade history moves from human mythical origins to ancient civilization. By the end of the year students have learned something of the ancient cultures of India, Persia, Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Greece.

The highlight of the year is each student's participation in a Greek Pentathlon. Hosted by WSL, the pentathlon includes fifth grade classes from other Waldorf schools in the region. The fifth grade pent-athlete is a picture of harmony, with balanced physical proportions and grace. There is calm determination in the eyes of the javelin thrower. It is hard to imagine that the fleet footed, sleek fifth grader will ever tire of running.

# Grade Five Skills by Subject Area

## Work Habits and Attitude

In grade five, students should:

- Show respect for teacher, classmates, property, and materials
- Come to school with positive attitude
- Serve the needs of the group, support others
- Work individually or in collaboration with classmates without continued adult guidance and intervention
- Get work done in timely fashion
- Demonstrate intention to do best work
- Be open and willing to work with feedback from teacher and classmates, to work out classroom and social issues
- Be inclusive and practice positive social habits

## Language Arts

In grade five, students should be able to:

- Exhibit sustained attention to primary speaker to capture details and facts
- Participate in daily recitation, story recapitulation, and oral reports
- Demonstrate clear diction, meter, cadence, syntax, volume, rate, and artistic expression when speaking
- Develop dictionary skills
- Syllabicate words according to rules for syllabication
- Master weekly spelling and vocabulary list
- Continue work with spelling rules and irregularities
- Increase accuracy and speed in dictation
- Compose several paragraphs out of curriculum material presented (biographical or historical sketches, for example)
- Write simple research reports from student readings and observations
- Write and edit with awareness of spelling punctuation, parts of speech, capitalization, active and passive voice
- Write stories from own experience
- Read books related to the curriculum
- Demonstrate oral and written recall

## Math

In grade five, students should be able to:

- Work with fractions using all four operations (including division of fractions using the reciprocal)
- Add/subtract mixed numbers by finding common denominators and regrouping
- Name place values (whole numbers and decimals)

- Multiply and divide mixed numbers using conversions to improper fractions, expansion, and simplification of fractions
- Practice four basic operations on whole numbers (multiple digit), long division using estimation and rounding of numbers
- Know multiplication tables out of sequential order
- Multiply by 10s (for example 20x600)
- Discern proper operation to use in word problems
- Continue practice in “mental math,” speed calculations
- Discover prime numbers, factors, common factors, rules of divisibility
- Work with decimals
- Develop facility with fraction/decimal equivalents
- Calculate area and perimeter for rectangles and squares
- Begin geometry with freehand geometric drawing

## Natural Science and Social Studies

In grade five, students will:

- Explore mythology and the ancient cultures of India, Persia, Mesopotamia, Babylonia, Assyria, Egypt, and Greece
- Develop familiarity with historical maps of the above cultures (construct or draw)
- Study geographical regions of North America, the relationship to the people living there and their occupations
- Begin to work with geographical terms
- Learn political and geographical boundaries of North America: countries, states, capitals
- Examine Earth’s major climate zones
- Develop an understanding of the plant, its relationship to sun and earth, life cycles, and anatomy
- Explore categories of plants and plant relationship to geography and climate

## Foreign Languages

Reading material is introduced and becomes a focus for vocabulary work. Grammatical concepts established in the mother tongue are practiced in simple statements written in the foreign language. Homework is given on a regular basis.

By the end of grade five, students should:

- Improve writing and reading skills
- Listen to a poem and songs and recognize main themes
- Be able to respond to simple questions from text reading
- Memorize plays and longer poems
- Practice writing simple paragraphs
- Read short paragraphs with good pronunciation
- Know the verb forms in the present tense

- Start recognizing conjugation of regular and irregular verbs in sentences
- Use article, nouns adjectives, and prepositions
- Use numbers up to 1000

## Instrumental Music

By the end of grade five, students should:

- Be able to play with facility in the keys of C, G, D, A, and F major
- Be able to participate in a musical ensemble with four and five part harmony
- Understand how to read and interpret key signatures up to two sharps and flats
- Be able to sight-read basic melodies and harmonies
- Be able to complete simple rhythmic dictation
- Understand basic concepts of ensemble playing
- Perform at whole school assemblies and concert evenings

Students who start wind instruments should achieve basic facility on their wind instruments by the end of the year and should be able to apply their musical knowledge from their studies of string instruments to the wind instruments.

## Chorus

In grade five, students should be able to:

- Sing medleys, several songs put together
- Sing rounds; start at same time in parts and end together
- Keep rhythm
- Begin sight singing and understand basic music theory concepts, including key signatures and scale degrees
- Experience culture and historical moods through music (India, Greece, etc.)
- Relate singing to geography by singing folk songs that belong to different regions of North America
- Participate in arts evenings and concerts in concert dress

## Art

In grade five, students should be able to:

- Draw geometric forms freehand
- Develop and work with nuances of color to create qualitative differences
- Apply watercolor painting techniques to illustrate plant world, geography, and ancient cultures
- Model with clay, subjects from ancient cultures
- Practice drawing and shading techniques with colored pencils

## Handwork

By the end of grade five, students should be able to:

- Read and attempt to follow a simple knitting pattern independently

- Design their own socks
- Keep track of and care for their supplies
- Strengthen previously learned knitting skills by knitting a sample gauge
- Continue to work with color values and design
- Knit with five double-pointed needles
- Turn a heel and shape the toe of each sock
- Knit a pair of socks (for themselves)
- Some may learn to hand-sew a gusseted animal

## Woodwork

By the end of grade five, students should be able to:

- Practice proper care of and develop respect for tools
- Work within prescribed safety rules
- Carve both convex shapes (egg form) and begin concave shapes (bowl) with a mallet and gouge
- Make basic measurements with a ruler
- Work with a rasp to shape and smooth a form
- Recognize common local wood species
- Complete the term project

## Eurythmy

In grade five, students should be able to:

- Experience historical epochs – India, Persia, Egypt, Greece – through movement, gesture, and music
- Work with lemniscate and star forms
- Work with geometric forms, using copper rods in frontal orientation
- Continue dexterity and concentration exercises
- Learn peace and energy dances
- Practice stepping rhythms
- Know eurythmy alphabet, every gesture of every sound
- Perform on stage

## Physical Education

In grade five, students should be able to:

- Add strength, beauty, and speed to all skills developed in previous years
- Train for and participate in a classic Greek Pentathlon (running, wrestling, jumping, throwing javelin, throwing discus)
- Play team games with strength and accuracy
- Practice gymnastics: cartwheel, handstand, and round off
- Begin developing skills in unicycle, Rolla bola, and rolling globe
- Show good sportsmanship