



Elementary School

Grade 4

Curriculum Handbook

2019-2020

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Our Educational Philosophy

The mission of TLC International School is to plant seeds of knowledge that can grow to equip students academically, socially, physically, and spiritually for temporal and eternal success.

Our vision is to provide the best in education, partnering with parents to prepare students for life with academic tools, character training, development of social skills and spiritual mentoring.

Education is more than intellectual development. True education develops the mind, body, spirit and social skills of the child. Children at TLC learn cooperation, integrity, respect, creativity, and self-discipline. Positive values and behavior are rewarded in an environment that provides a safe haven for children to attempt new challenges without fear of failure.

An Introduction to Grade 4

Students typically enter 4th grade around the age of 9. In our classes they can expect to arrive and unpack their bags at their own desks, tables and lockers. They will have 6 core classes including English Language, Math, Science, Social Studies, Reading and Mandarin. They have recess every day. We also have elective classes that will be once a week: Music, Computers, Library, Art, PE, and Character education. On every Friday morning we have an assembly with all of elementary to watch different classes perform and teach us about a character trait. There will also be a Star Student to honor someone who has done well with the character trait that week.

The students in 4th grade have 2 core teachers; Ms. Meg for Reading and Social Studies, and Mr. Matt for Writing/Grammar and Science, each teacher teaches their homeroom class Math. Students will be expected to transfer to another classroom for the other classes. Students will be able to use their lockers first thing, after lunch, and right before dismissal. They are responsible for their own work and communication books, and they are expected to write down homework every day and complete it after school.



Understanding by Design

“Our lessons, units, and courses should be logically inferred from the results sought, not derived from the methods, books, and activities with which we are most comfortable. Curriculum should lay out the most effective ways of achieving specific results... in short, the best designs derive backward from the learnings sought.”

- Grant Wiggins and Jay McTigh in their book Understanding by Design

UBD (Understanding by Design) is a technique of delivering content introduced by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe. The methods laid out in this educational technique offer a way of designing courses and delivering content through “Backward Design”. Students at TLC participate in units of study that cover standard driven topics determined by the AERO standards. TLC uses the UBD methods of teaching to ensure courses taught at TLC cover a series of standard based units. These units are designed in a way that ensures quality understanding is provided to all students enrolled in courses at TLC. Content delivery then includes a variety of quality teaching strategies and assessment techniques while keeping a standard based focus in every classroom. This unit-based planning approach follows a 3-stage process of Backward Design.

Stage 1 - Identify Desired Results

In order to determine if our students are achieving our desired results we must determine the what the desired end result is. If we teach with this in mind we make sure that everything that occurs in each course is bringing students closer to that goal.

Stage 2 – Determine Acceptable Evidence

It is very important that before we teach, we determine what assessments and indicators we will use to determine if students are progressing to a understanding of each standard covered in the courses taught. Evidence may be gathered through projects, questioning, quizzes, papers, group projects, lab projects, written tests, discussions and more.

Stage 3 – Plan Learning experiences and Instruction

After determining the end goal and identifying the evidence that will determine student achievement the daily lessons are determined. Daily lessons are carefully planned and carried out by teachers to support and reach those desired results. Each day students are given a clear objective that lines up and supports the mastery of the goals determined and indicated by the standards covered in each unit.

This approach ensures there are no gaps in the curriculum and all standards are covered in TLC International School’s courses. The aim is to ensure the best possible method of content delivery is given to all TLC students. The students’ learning and understanding is the focus in UBD’s “Backwards Design”. Through this method of “Backwards Design” we can ensure that the indicators of student learning are achieved in every single course offered at TLC.

The Gradual Release Model

The Gradual Release model, developed by Doug Fisher and Nancy Frey, is a broadly recognized approach for moving classroom instruction from teacher-centred to student-centred. This model includes 4 steps: “I do it”, “We do it”, “You do it together”, and “You do it independently”.

During the “I do it” step, the teacher plays an important role in the delivery of the content. Explicit teaching, modelling, and ‘think aloud’ are common strategies used by the teacher during this step.

As the students begin to acquire the new skill or information, the responsibility of learning begins to shift from teacher-directed instruction to student-centred activities. During the “We do it” stage, the teacher uses strategic questions, prompts, and cues to guide students towards mastery of an objective.

“You do it together” is where students collaborate and depend on other classmates to meet objectives. During this time of instruction, the teacher will move among groups to clarify any misconceptions.



Subject Specific Information

Reading, Writing, Grammar and Spelling

One of TLC's *Student Outcomes* is to create "reading and writing specialists who discover the world and themselves through the art of reading and writing." Fourth grade aims to accomplish this goal by developing unit plans based on AERO Standards. These standards enable students to build on the skills they have previously acquired to become self-sufficient readers. 4th grade reading begins the year focusing on summarizing, before moving on to various comprehension strategies for both literature and informational texts. Vocabulary acquisition is stressed using context clues and vocabulary notebooks. By the end of the year, students are expected to read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

Subject overviews:

Reading- Students in 4th grade

Unit 1 – Summarizing

Unit 2 - Comprehension Strategies

Unit 3 - Close Reading

Unit 4 – Characters

Unit 5 - Comprehension Strategies Part 2

Unit 6 – Genres

Unit 7 - Word Study



Writing/Grammar-

Unit 1 - Writing a Personal Narrative and Sentences

Unit 2- Write informative and explanatory texts

Unit 3- Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar

Unit 4 - Pronouns & Writing a Book Review

Unit 5 - More Verbs & Tall Tales

Unit 6 - Adverbs and Adjectives

Unit 7 - Writing a Business Letter & Prepositions

Unit 8 - Greek and Latin Root Words & Year Review

Spelling- Students will have weekly spelling lists where they will be expected to learn the words and be able to properly write and use them.

Mathematics

In Math class, our goal is to create an understanding of how and why we use numbers in real life situations. We use real world problems to create interest and use materials we can manipulate to increase our understanding of how math works. We try to change our thinking to not just memorizing facts but understanding what a problem is really representing and what the answer means. We have a focus on cooperative learning and encourage each other to succeed.

We use authentic assessments in addition to the traditional tests and quizzes to truly see if the students understand how to use the information they have learned in a real-world situation. These authentic assessments are more than just memorizing the information but using real world problems and solutions. They often use manipulatives and extra materials instead of solving math problems on a page.

We also encourage the use of Khan Academy online. This wonderful tool helps us to assign extra practice to the students that need it.

Units Studied:

Module 1: Place Value, Rounding, and Algorithms for Addition and Subtraction

Module 2: Unit Conversions and Problem Solving with Metric Measurement

Module 3: Multi-Digit Multiplication and Division

Module 4: Angle Measure and Plane Figures

Module 5: Fraction Equivalence, Ordering, and Operations

Module 6: Decimal Fractions

Module 7: Exploring Measurement with Multiplication



Science

Another one of TLC's *Expected Student Outcomes* is to create "independent thinkers who analyze and apply knowledge across content areas and in the world around them." Through the study of science, students can learn a plethora of processing skills to help aid them in thinking critically and creatively. Fourth grade intends to further develop these processing skills through the study of various units based on AERO Standards. Science 4 units include: Living Things, Forces and Energy, The Moon and Oceans, The Earth for Our Use, and Sound and Hearing.

Social Studies

At TLC, 4th grade Social Studies students are learning to discover the world through the eyes of a historian. The students in this course will participate in conducting research, writing papers, creating projects, and collaborating to grow in their historic knowledge in accordance with the topics studied. This course is based on AERO standards. During this course, students will become familiar with the concepts listed below and complete units of study on the listed topics below. Each unit consists of 4-6 weeks of instruction, activities, projects, and assessments. Students are expected to show understanding of the topics explored through a variety of evidences.

Units Studied:

Introduction: Review of Geography

Unit 1: The Land and Early People

- The Nation's Geography
- Native Americans

Unit 2: Exploration and Settlement

- The Age of Exploration
- Building the First Colonies
- The Thirteen Colonies

Unit 3: The American Revolution

- The Colonies Unite
- The Revolutionary War

Unit 4: A Growing Nation

- The Constitution
- The Young Republic



Mandarin

Mandarin Class of G4

Curriculum: FL-G4 《Chinese for G4》

SL-YB2 《Easy steps to Chinese 2》

Class: Students in G4 will be put into two different classes. If the student speaks mandarin at home, he/she will be put into the first language mandarin class (FL-G4). If the student speaks other languages at home, he/she will be put into the second language mandarin class (SL-YB2). But we do have some exceptions: if the student's mandarin level is lower than his/her normal level, we will put him/her in the lower level mandarin class. If a first language mandarin student has low mandarin comprehension, he/she will be put into the second language mandarin class. If a second mandarin student has very good mandarin comprehension, he/she will be put into the first language mandarin class.

Assessment: Assessments will be given for each unit/chapter. We made our own mandarin assessment papers.

Homework: The students in G4 have mandarin homework about 20 minutes per day.

Class Frequency: Students in G4 have 40 minutes mandarin class every day.

G4 中文班

教材: FL-G4 《语文（四年级）》

SL-YB2 《轻松学中文 2》

分班: G4 的学生被划分为两种不同类型的中文班。如果一个学生在家说的是中文, 他/她将被分在第一语言中文班 (FL-G4)。如果一个学生在家说的是其他语言, 他/她将被分在第二语言中文班 (SL-YB2)。当然, 我们也有一些特例: 如果一个学生的中文水平低于他/她的正常年级水平, 他/她将被分在一个较低水平的中文班。如果一个第一语言的学生的中文理解力较差, 他/她将被分在第二语言中文班。如果一个学生的中文理解力很好, 他/她将被分在第一语言中文班。

测试: 根据每个单元/章节的内容给出相应的测试。我们使用的是自己做的测试卷。

家庭作业: G4 的学生每周有大约 20 分钟的家庭作业。

上课频率: G4 的学生每天有 40 分钟的中文课时间。

Character Education

Students have one Character Education lesson per week which lasts for 40 minutes. This lesson is given by a specialist Character Education teacher. The lessons will focus on one Character Education trait per month and will follow the following schedule for the year:



Month	Character Trait
August (19-30)	Intro/Dream Theme
September (2-27)	Boldness
October (Oct 7-Nov 1)	Trust
November (5-27)	Forgiveness
December (2-20)	Justice
February (Feb 3-28)	Ingenuity
March (2-27)	Humility
April (Mar 30-Apr 30)	Diversity
May (4-29)	Unity
June (1-24)	Review traits

Students will normally listen to a story in the lesson that illustrates the character trait. They will discuss the meaning of the word and think about how that character trait can be applied to themselves and their families. The character trait is also the theme of the weekly assemblies where songs, presentations and certificates will be about the character trait that is the theme of the month.

Computers

4th grade- They have computer class once a week for 40 minutes in the elementary computer lab. Each lesson objectives are based on 2017 National Educational Technology Standards for Students (NETS) initiated by the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE). There is a variety of resources/materials used for instruction. Computer class aims to help students properly access, manage, process, interpret, and communicate information.

Unit 1: Technology Operations and Concepts Unit 2: Typing
Unit 3: Digital Citizenship & Safety Unit 4: Internet Navigation
Unit 5: Research and Information Fluency Unit 6: Communication and Collaboration
Unit 7: Multimedia & Presentation Tools Unit 8: Computational skills

Music

In the Music lessons, students learn to appreciate Music and the different ways one can create sound. They will sing, play and learn the theory of percussion and string instruments. They will study composers and dance movements. They will have quizzes and practical tests for purposes of evaluation and assessment.

Being creative in Music gives students the opportunity to learn to think both creatively and critically. Critical thinking includes the ability to understand, respond to and talk about various musical compositions. By teaching students to perform, notate and appreciate Music, we can enhance their skills related to creativity and critical thought.

PE

In the PE lessons, students have the opportunity to grow in their fitness and athletic abilities. They will acquire the knowledge, processes, skills and confidence needed to engage in meaningful physical activity both now and in the future.

The learning goals for PE are as follows:

- Students will be taught a variety of exercises and skills that will develop their agility, flexibility, strength, reaction time, balance and coordination.
- Students will learn how to work as a member of team in a variety of games such as: soccer, volleyball, basketball, dodgeball, American football, team races, gymnastics and acrobatic movements.
- Students will understand the value of health and good hygiene.

The requirements for the Physical Education lessons are as follows:

- Tennis shoes, trainers or sneakers.
- Appropriate clothes.
- Cooperation.
- Communication.
- Teamwork and sportsmanship!



The EFL programme in Grade 4

When students enroll at TLC, they take an entrance exam. The results of this exam help administration determine if a student needs EFL classes. These students are two or three grade levels behind in English. An EFL student spends an hour and a half in a specialized EFL class each morning. These classes give more focused attention on building these crucial beginning English skills:

EFL 2- Grades 2nd – 4th

EFL 2 teaches different language skills, depending on students' English abilities and needs. The goal of EFL 2 is to prepare students to speak, read, and write in English by offering lessons on phonics, conversation, vocabulary, reading and grammar. There is differentiated instruction for language and literacy in the form of guided reading. EFL 2 student will use parts of the textbook *On Our Way to English* and variety of other resources. EFL 2 students are expected to complete EFL homework focused on reading, grammar, phonics, and vocabulary as well as the homework assigned in their core classes.

EFL 3 - Grades 3rd-5th

EFL 3 focuses on helping students build vocabulary, strengthen oral grammar skills, increase reading comprehension and fluency, and improve their writing skills and idea development. Students in EFL 3 still need development of these skills before being able to mainstream. EFL 3 student will use the text book *On Our Way to English* which sets up a strong structure. These are available in each of the grade levels. In EFL 3, students are expected to complete EFL homework focused on reading, grammar, writing, and vocabulary as well as the homework assigned in their core classes. EFL homework is a tool to help students grow and understand English more.

Exiting EFL

TLC has criteria for mainstreaming students that outlines specific requirements when they can join their grade level classes. This needs recommendation from the EFL and Core teacher. Parental permission is also a requirement that needs to be followed. The student needs to have demonstrated a growth in reading as shown on the F&P assessment, the MAP RIT score, the core and EFL class grades. It is expected that a student should ideally be within one grade level of their peers in reading.

Assessment in Grade 4

Assessments in 4th grade will be reflected by the Aero standard that is taught throughout the unit. Teachers have pre-planned tests and quizzes to determine whether the students are proficient in the area. There will be about one quiz, one test, and one authentic assessment for every unit taught. Students will be notified in advance of all tests.

Language arts- Every Friday there will be a quiz on the spelling words they received each Monday.

Math, Science, Reading, Social Studies- Students will have tests at the end of every unit and quizzes throughout the chapter.

Homework in Grade 4

Homework is 15% of a student's grade. Late work will receive 50%. Work that is not turned in will result in a 0. Students are expected to turn in all homework first thing in the morning. Homework is only given to students as reinforcement of a topic discussed, taught and practiced at school. Teachers give time in class for students to at least begin homework and ask questions while in class.

Reading: Students are expected to read 20 minutes and complete a daily reading log in which they define a word that challenged them. The students will write the challenge word, define it, use it in a sentence, and draw a picture of the word.

Language arts: Students are expected to complete the spelling booklet for each list of vocab words. This is equivalent to about 4 pages-or one page per night. Spelling booklets are turned in on Friday.

Math: Students will be given math worksheets throughout each chapter and unit to reinforce the material they learn. These worksheets are good practice for students who already understand what is being taught and for students who do not fully understand. The teacher will collect these the following day and grade them.

History/Science: Students will be assigned worksheets to practice principles learned in class. Students are also expected to study for quizzes and tests.