



Fourth Grade Overview

Covenant Christian School

Fourth grade students at Covenant Christian School continue to grow as whole persons through an integral curriculum and experiential learning in a Christ-centered, grace-filled environment. The fourth grade program is constructed with an underlying biblical worldview as students continue to grow both as learners and followers of Christ.

Bible

Students continue their systematic study of the Old Testament, building upon their work in third grade. Fourth grade focuses upon God's redemptive work as well as His prophetic hints at the coming of the Messiah. In studying Old Testament books, students seek to determine the author, the author's primary purpose, the original audience, and God's message to that audience. Then, students seek to understand how the Old Testament points the reader to Jesus.

Language Arts

Students resume their study of *Voyages* grammar. This curriculum weaves together grammar and writing as students learn the relationship between the two. Because a solid understanding of grammar strengthens writing capabilities, grammar remains an important part of the fourth grade year. Nouns, verbs, pronouns, adjectives, and adverbs are all studied. Students learn to analyze sentences and paragraphs, deciphering the various roles that words play in those sentences and paragraphs. These skills are reinforced not only through formal lessons, but also through writing assignments as students use their grammatical knowledge to revise their work. Furthermore, quality literature is used to further expand students' understanding not only of grammar and sentence structure, but also of writing styles.

Using the 6+1 Traits of Writing as a guide, students continue to learn various writing forms as they work on ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, conventions, and presentation. By the end of the year, students write three paragraph essays with a strong thesis. Additional forms of writing may include persuasive, narrative, expository, descriptive, and research papers. Students hone their writing skills through work in other subjects such as History and Science.

Several genres of literature are covered during the fourth grade year. Chosen literature is designed to expose students to both classical and contemporary works as well as to a variety of circumstances and cultures. Historical literature is chosen to coincide with the historical period studied in fourth grade. Students learn to identify plot, setting, character, and literary motifs, such as metaphor and simile, while being exposed to literature that strengthens their writing abilities. Because all truth is God's truth, students determine where authors' themes coincide with a biblical worldview and where they oppose it.

Using the *Wordly Wise* curriculum, students learn a biweekly list of spelling and vocabulary words. Furthermore, students grow in their knowledge of words and comprehension.

Finally, because fine motor skills are important, students in fourth grade continue to practice handwriting in both print and cursive.

Math

Students in fourth grade continue their Math studies using Saxon Math's fifth grade curriculum. Students master their math facts along with long multiplication and division, fractions, geometric shapes, area, volume, and other mathematical concepts. Students engage in a variety of mathematical problem-solving and hands-on activities that connect math to real life situations, bridging the abstract and the concrete.

Science

In Science, students learn more about the plant world, focusing primarily on the forest ecosystem. This links with the History curriculum, as students focus on the old forests of Europe that allowed such tales as *Robin Hood* to emerge. Students then bridge the study of forest ecosystems with anatomy by studying mammals, leading to anatomy and physiology, and focusing on human systems and the discoveries of Leonardo da Vinci. Fourth grade students also study astronomy, which also links to History through the discoveries of Galileo Galilei and Nicolaus Copernicus. Finally, fourth graders continue to practice the scientific method during their exploration, constantly asking questions and seeking answers.

History

In fourth grade, students continue to use Susan Wise Bauer's *The Story of the World* to learn chronologically about global history. Building on the historical time line from third grade, students study the fall of Rome, the rise of empires in Europe and Asia, feudalism, Medieval times, the Reformation, and the Renaissance. Additionally, students read literature that corresponds with their historical timeline, reading *Robin Hood* and several age appropriate works by William Shakespeare. Reading the works of Shakespeare leads to the annual fourth grade production of a Shakespeare play during Covenant's annual Fine Arts Street Fest.

Latin

Students begin formal Latin instruction in the fourth grade. Latin provides great opportunities for expanding student understanding of the English language and grammar. In addition, Latin supports later instruction in the languages in general and, in particular, the Romance languages (i.e. Spanish, Italian and French). At Covenant, Latin supports other subjects such as Science as well as the study of cultures across time and geography.

Enrichment

In addition to classroom experiences, students also engage in a variety of off-campus learning experiences. Meaningful off-campus experiences can serve to enrich student learning and expand student awareness. This includes, among others, trips to the Cathedral Basilica, Shaw Nature Reserve, and the St. Louis Art Museum.

In addition to the classroom curriculum, students attend Morning Gathering (chapel), Music, Art, Drawing, Physical Education and library.