



Village School

93 Village Street
Marblehead, Massachusetts 01945
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September 2014-2015

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the fifth grade experience. We're looking forward to working with your children and watching them learn and grow throughout the year. Some of our goals are:

- To provide a safe and secure environment for learning
- To develop good organization, study skills, and work habits
- To provide settings which foster cooperation in learning and social situations
- To develop a sense of responsibility for one's work and actions
- To foster a sense of social awareness and sensitivity to others' feelings and needs
- To develop knowledge and skills which will provide an educational foundation to carry through the years of secondary school

Our program consists of language arts, math, science, and social studies. We often integrate several subjects into a unit study.

This year we will continue to participate in our **Community Read** program by reading The Julian Chapter, which is a continuation of the book Wonder. If you would like to share this as a family, you may purchase this short book online. This book will continue the themes of kindness and friendship

Language Arts

In language arts, we write and read. Students keep their writing in a classroom folder. They draft, confer with each other and with the teacher, revise, edit, and recopy for "publication." The teacher edits only after the child has edited his or her own work. Students experiment with various kinds of writing (including fiction, poetry, persuasive

writing, other nonfiction, and letters). We teach the seven traits of effective writing: idea development, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, presentation and conventions. Conventions include spelling, grammar, capitalization and punctuation instruction. Students “publish” their work in various ways, such as recopying on white paper, making bound books, contributing to class books, giving talks and presentations, or submitting to school publications. The main goal is that each student improve his or her ability to express thoughts clearly in writing. Our objectives reflect the Massachusetts State Frameworks.

The reading program includes independent reading, book discussion groups, reading response logs, and whole-class sharing times. Children are expected to read from many different genres (such as realistic fiction, historical fiction, adventure, biography, information books, poetry, and other categories). Students learn about story elements, elements of style, and ways to respond to books. They also learn strategies for decoding words, reading for fluency, and reading for understanding.

All students study the two required fifth-grade titles, Hatchet and Fighting Ground, and students are encouraged to read other books from the fifth grade list.

We will also focus on spelling skills and strategies, including prefixes, suffixes, and word patterns. Students have weekly lists of spelling words to learn, and they will add personal spelling words which they need to know or want to know. They have regular spelling tests.

Grades are based on standards and progress toward individual and group goals. We often use rubrics to identify expectations. Students also keep portfolios for assessment.

Math

Marblehead School District’s math program is GO Math. This program aligns with the Common Core State Standards and Massachusetts Mathematics Frameworks.

Mathematics includes numeration, computation, measurement, geometry, fractions, decimals, and practical applications emphasized through problem-solving, graphing, and estimation. Individual growth is stressed through skill building which uses success to motivate students to reach their individual potential. Cooperation is encouraged through cooperative learning groups.

Science

The fifth grade science curriculum covers physical science, life science, and earth science. Our curriculum includes two units from Science and Technology for Children (STC): Floating and Sinking and Ecosystems. The major emphases of fifth grade science are to focus, explore, create, and apply. The science learning units are based on the scientific method which encourages students to make observations, predict outcomes, and draw

final conclusions. Students utilize a hands-on approach and should become comfortable and interested in the world of science.

Social Studies

The core of the fifth grade social studies program is the understanding of our American heritage. We study the early American history experience. Students read from social studies texts: Our Country, A History of US, Our United States, as well as from supplementary materials.

Interwoven is the geography of the United States, including economics, agriculture and industry. Students learn the use of maps and globes which includes directions, latitude, longitude, continents and oceans. We emphasize current events and study skills.

Our overriding intent is to help children see how the past influences the present and future.

We support all of our curriculum with related field trips, enrichment programs, games, media, and art activities.

We encourage teacher and parent communications. There will be four half-day parent conference opportunities.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Allen
Natalie Belli
Lindsay Burke
Dawna Deiana
Valerie DeGeorge
Jennifer DiGiammarino
Alexandra Hobson
Hannah Hood
Mary Kane
Emily Knight
MaryEllen (Hart) Kraft
Ashlee Leibman
Rena Mello
Lisa Murphy
Tracy Nesbitt
Rene Puopolo
Janet Rumson
Allie Stienstra
Jane Sullivan
Dana Trudeau

Steve Volpe
Pam Williams