



# Kindergarten - 1st

Lower School



## LANGUAGE ARTS

Reading and writing are developmental processes with predictable and well-defined stages. However, the age and rate of development may differ significantly from one child to another. At Riverfield, literacy development plans are based on the personalized needs and goals for each child. Both reading skills and love of literature are cultivated. Writing and spelling are learned in conjunction with reading and are tools for effective communication. Riverfield strives for students to see themselves as writers. Students spend time each day engaged in meaningful writing experiences designed to encourage the expression of thoughts with organization, fluency, and clarity. Students are offered literacy provocations in which they must analyze, discuss, reflect, and evaluate a variety of media including literature, film, music, and expository text from various perspectives. Through research and investigation projects, reading and writing are often integrated in joyful, child-driven ways. The students' representation of their understanding may include text, journaling, oral presentation, or a multi-media project. Teachers and students work together individually and in small flexible groups to best meet the students' development along a continuum of learning. Parents and teachers communicate to share information and support ongoing practice of developing skills and understanding.

## SCIENCE

Riverfield's science philosophy strives to help children become independent thinkers. Life skills are expanded as students engage in the scientific process, learning to question, explore, observe, make predictions, discover, experiment, and problem solve. The curriculum could include topics such as seasons, water, animals, human body, and aerospace plus other topics as they tie into long-term investigations and research.

## MATH

At Riverfield we recognize children have been working since birth in constructing their understanding of mathematics. K-1 teachers work to continue to support that intrinsically driven curiosity while also facilitating growth in new mathematical ideas and concepts. Teachers develop classroom environments that are rich with materials and provide opportunities to explore and represent math concepts. Nationally recognized math standards guide the creation of provocations, investigations, and the recognition of opportunity that drives reflection, discussion and, representation of developing skills and knowledge. Students work with teachers both individually and in small groups. New concepts are introduced by the teacher and at other times drawn from the students' interests and experiences. Through hands on experiences balanced with opportunities to represent understanding, students develop skills of writing and reading about math, problem solving, critical thinking, and the ability to articulate their understanding of math concepts.

## SOCIAL STUDIES

The goal of Social Studies at Riverfield is to cultivate responsible citizens. In Kindergarten and First grade we continue to foster development of identity of self and understanding of the community in which children play a vital role. Students build their own life skills while recognizing their responsibility to the local, national, and global community as they explore the social aspects of the human experience. Classroom teachers and our school counselor work together in developing opportunities for students to construct meaningful knowledge of problem solving, mediation, social skills, and self-awareness. Through student provocation and investigation, content is presented that explores our history while simultaneously developing understanding of community and ways students can make a difference.





## SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL ASPECT

At Riverfield Country Day School great attention is given to the social-emotional needs of children. Self-regulation is supported by a knowledge of age appropriate practices, availability of quiet spaces and incorporation of movement and music. Self-identity and empathy are developed through discussion and activities focused on communication, understanding of emotions and conflict resolution. Educators intentionally personalize the students' experiences in order to support confidence and competency. Collaboration and project based learning encourage opportunities for students to learn and problem solve through cooperation, negotiation and compromise.

The Lower School Counselor visits each classroom weekly for Community Circles to provide opportunities to explore social-emotional strategies, develop social interactions and problem solving, and deepen understanding of self and others through games, discussion, children's literature and other developmentally appropriate activities.

## HOMEWORK

The role of homework is to provide repetition and practice of developing concepts as well as to communicate progress with families. Teachers are responsive to feedback provided by families and always interested in working as a team with families in developing homework that meets student needs. Homework in Lower School includes a nightly minimum of 10 minutes of reading for K-1, 20 minutes for 2nd-3rd, and 30 minutes for 4th-5th grades. Students will also have math and other homework based on the developmentally appropriate needs of the student and class. Teachers often work with students and families to determine the time frame given for different assignments.

## COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

Multiple conferences are offered during the year in Kindergarten through 5th grade. Parents are also welcome and encouraged to request additional conferences to share information in support of the student. In the K-1 wing digital portfolios have been developed to represent the ongoing development of individual students. 2nd and 3rd grade families receive a conference form that is based on reflection and assessment by the teachers and student that represents the student as a learner. Grades are introduced in 4th and 5th grade and information about the students' growth and challenges are shared in teacher comments. In all ages our goal is to provide ongoing connection and communication among Riverfield and the student's family. As students' progress, they become more aware of their own learning style, development, and areas of strengths and weaknesses. Students develop communication skills and self-confidence while reflecting on their growth and development.

## K-1ST COURSE LIST

Self-contained classrooms  
PE  
Music  
Spanish  
Community Circle  
Library  
Art  
Technology

