Social Studies

Fourth graders study how *Native Americans* lived and interacted. They study about the similarities and differences between tribes in the North American regions and how geography influenced daily life and culture. Fourth graders also study the *Early Explorations of the New World* by the Vikings, the Maya, Aztec, and Inca civilizations that existed in Central and South America along with their locations, prominent features, and the impact of the conquistadors. The third major unit of study is *Colonial America*. Students study how and why people colonize; and the reasons that political principals of the Unites States were largely shaped by the English colonists. Within these three major units of study, the concepts of location, place, human interaction with the environment, and movement, and regions are emphasized.

Visual Art

In fourth grade, students will expand their awareness and sensitivity to include more challenging, in depth subjects using a variety of media and techniques. Focus moves from self-expression to include drawing/painting from direct observation and imagination. Students use problem solving, observation, analysis and self-assessment to create, analyze, and refine works of art. They express specific concepts, including, still-life and value, using the **Elements of Art** and the **Principles of Design**. Students follow a sequential creating process and can communicate this process to others. Work includes drawing, painting, printmaking, collage and sculpture/construction. All of these are used to enhance and refine skills in the Visual Art domains of **Communications and Expression, Design and Composition,** and **Methods, Tools and Techniques.**

Music

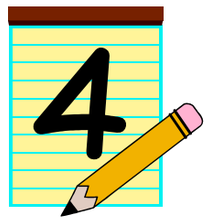
Fourth grade music expands students' understanding of music concepts introduced previously with greater focus on performance, analysis, and the study of orchestral music. Formal singing as part of a large group is introduced through a weekly Chorus rehearsal. Students may elect to begin a band instrument, in addition to previously introduced string instruments. All of the above are used to continue to enhance/refine skills in the Music domains of **Creating**, **Performing** and **Responding.**

Physical Education

The fourth grade elementary physical education program is designed to teach children motor skills and skill themes that are developmentally appropriate for their age. Motor skills are taught within the context of skill themes. "Skill themes are fundamental movements that are later modified into the more specialized patterns on which activities of increasing complexity are built. Once the basic skills are learned to a certain degree of proficiency, they are combined with other skills and used in a more complex setting, such as those found in dance, games, and gymnastics." (Graham, Parker, Holt/Hale, 1999)

Library & Digital Learning

The library and digital learning curriculum integrates information and technology literacy skills with classroom curriculum learning. Students learn keyboard fluency, text editing for spelling and grammar usage, and how to locate information through a subject or keyword search. They learn research skills to support information gathering and writing. Students download images and practice citing their sources. They learn to save and retrieve their work responsibly. For instance, students studying Exploration read maps, gather facts from print and electronic sources and present new knowledge using traditional or electronic tools. This area of the curriculum is assessed within the context of the activity in which it is embedded.



NEEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Grade 4 Progress Report Parent Brochure

The Progress Report

This progress report is intended to *complement* existing parent conferences and to better communicate with you about your child's progress toward mastering the learning expectations for his/her grade level. It is a reflection of the district's goal to have a system in place that enables students to be engaged in challenging academic experiences that are grounded in clearly defined standards. It also represents how schools across the state and country are now reporting student learning. These types of reporting systems communicate students' progress in a way that descriptively reflects what s/he knows and what s/he is able to do in relation to the state curriculum standards. A student's achievement is reported separately from effort.

The parent brochure outlines the categories that are included in the report for each curriculum area and provides a description of the characteristics associated with proficiency in that category. In each reporting period, the skills that are taught are assessed against a benchmark. Numerical levels are used to report performance with respect to the grade level learning goals. The system is designed to describe how well a student is progressing with respect to mid and end-of-year grade level expectations, rather than in relation to other students in the class. It is a snapshot of a child's progress towards the mastery of grade level learning goals at *a particular point in time*. The scale *cannot be equated to traditional letter grades*. An explanation of these markings appears in this brochure.

Across the district, this type of reporting system is now in place for grades 1-5. It is designed to be responsive to updates in curriculum programming and state requirements as they occur. The progress report that you are seeing today represents the work of many thoughtful individuals and groups. We thank you for working with us to ensure a meaningful system for communicating student progress.

www.needham.k12.ma.us

1330 Highland Avenue, Needham, MA 02492
Dr. Daniel E. Gutekanst, Superintendent

Proficiency Scale – Social/Emotional	
C	Consistently
O	Often
S	Sometimes
I	Infrequently
*	See separate progress monitoring report

Proficiency Scale - Academic	
4	In addition to meeting the standard, the student is able to make in-depth inferences and applications that extend beyond what was taught. The student exceeds the January/June standard.
3	The student meets the January/June standard.
2	The student is progressing towards meeting the Jan/June standard.
1	The student needs more review & reinforcement, requires constant teacher support and assistance to learn and use information. The student is having difficulty meeting the January/June standard.
-	No taught during this reporting period.
*	See separate progress monitoring report.

Social & Personal Competencies

Social/Emotional/Interpersonal Skills-The social curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum. To be successful academically and socially, children need a set of social skills: cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control. Students who develop skills for decision-making, communication, cooperation, conflict resolution and problem solving develop healthy relationships for work and play. They become self-aware, self-managed and self-directed.

Work Habits-How children learn is as important as what they learn. Process and content go hand in hand. As students become emotionally and socially competent, they are more able to focus themselves, persevere through a difficult task, collaborate in group tasks, learn from a mistake, set goals, and use other skills that positively impact academic achievement.

English Language Arts (Reading)

Fourth grade readers use a system of strategic actions that include phonics and word analysis, meaning, and language structure in an integrated way to read texts with understanding. They read fluently with phrasing and expression. When reading new texts, they slow down to problem-solve unknown words and quickly pick up the pace again to focus on the meaning. The students learn to use comprehension strategies such as making connections to their own lives, their world, and other known texts; making and confirming predictions; and summarizing important ideas. They continue to hone their ability to infer what's implied but not stated and integrate text information with their own knowledge to create new understandings (synthesize). Fourth graders analyze texts, examining words that create sensory images or feelings and they evaluate and think critically about the ideas.

Adjusting their reading for different purposes, fourth graders learn to read a variety of genres including informational texts, poetry, fiction, and literature from diverse cultures. They read to learn new information as well as for enjoyment. The students learn to distinguish the characteristics of different genres (e.g. fiction, nonfiction, drama, poetry). They identify themes and main ideas, compare and contrast different points of view, and find evidence (details) from texts to support their thinking. Fourth graders learn how non-fiction texts are organized (e.g. cause and effect) and how to use charts, graphs, diagrams and other features of informational texts. They also examine the structures and elements of fiction (e.g. plot, setting, characters, problem, solution).

Fourth graders use language to communicate their ideas in discussions. They listen to other students' ideas, pose questions, and add their own information. They communicate their understandings of texts in written form, using evidence to support their thinking.

Language and Word Study—Fourth graders learn and use new vocabulary in the context of texts, as well as solidify their phonetic and word analysis knowledge (e.g. letters, syllables, word families, root words, prefixes, suffixes). They use grammar knowledge (e.g. nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs) to read and write texts. Fourth graders recognize many regular and irregular words that appear frequently in texts and learn about words that sound alike but are spelled differently (homophones), multiple meanings of words (homographs), and words that have the same or opposite meanings (synonyms, antonyms).

English/Language Arts (Writing)

In fourth grade, teachers look for evidence that a student can independently use the steps of the writing process. Students write in a variety of genres, including personal narrative, fiction, informational, and persuasive pieces. Multiple samples of writing inform a student's grade. Because various genres are taught at different times during the year, a student's grade in June could differ from that in January.

Writing Process-- Proficient writers write for a sustained amount of time. They generate ideas, plan, draft, revise, and edit their writing, incorporating feedback from adults and peers.

Structure-- Proficient writers provide a meaningful introduction and conclusion. They organize and connect ideas in logical order according to genre.

Development--Proficient writers include well-developed and organized paragraphs that support the main ideas or story. They elaborate with details and evidence that support the reader's understanding, using voice appropriate to the genre.

Conventions--Proficient writers apply rules for punctuation, grammar and usage, paragraphing and capitalization.

Mathematics

Needham's elementary mathematics program, *Think Math!* balances mathematical skill fluency with the development of conceptual understanding and problem solving within the following domains of the Massachusetts Common Core Standards:

Operations & Algebraic Thinking- Proficient students are able to solve multi-step whole number word problems using the four operations. They are able to represent these problems using equations with a letter standing for the unknown quantity, assess the reasonableness of answers using mental computation and estimation strategies and interpret solutions that entail remainders. They are able to find all factor pairs for a given whole number from 1 to 100, recognize that a whole number is a multiple of each of its factors, determine whether a given whole number is a multiple of a given one-digit number, and determine whether a given whole number is prime or composite.

Number & Operations in Base Ten- Proficient students recognize that in a multi-digit whole number, a digit in one place represents ten times what it represents in the place to its right. They are able to use place value understanding to round multi-digit whole numbers to any place, and fluently add and subtract multi-digit whole numbers using the standard algorithm. They know the multiplication facts through 12 x 12 by January and related division facts by June. They are able to multiply a whole number of up to four digits by a one-digit whole number, and to multiply two-digit numbers. They are able to divide four-digit numbers by one-digit numbers with and without remainders using place value or relationships of numbers.

Number & Operations--Fractions-Proficient students can explain, recognize and generate equivalent fractions. They are able to compare and write like and unlike fractions using the appropriate symbols (<, > or =). They can multiply a fraction by a whole number, and add two fractions with like denominators. They are able to express fractions with denominators of 10 or 100 as decimals and compare two decimals by reasoning about size.

Measurement & Data- Proficient students know relative sizes of measurement units and can express larger units in terms of smaller ones. They can apply the area and perimeter formulas for rectangles and measure angles. They are able to make appropriate graphs to display data sets. They can solve word problems involving distance, intervals of time, liquid volumes, masses of objects and money.

Geometry—Proficient students can draw and identify points, lines, line segments, rays, angles and perpendicular & parallel lines. They can classify two-dimensional figures based on the presence or absence of angles of a specified size. They understand symmetry, can identify symmetric figures and can draw lines of symmetry.

Science

The science curriculum builds students' science practices through three units of study in the fourth grade. The "Light & Shadows" unit covers the physical properties of light, astronomy, and observation of the moon phases. The "Changing Earth" unit covers earth as a system and the processes of rapid and gradual change. The newly created Insect unit uses observations of live insects to guide student questions. The unit culminates with a design an insect project that is used to assess student understanding of structure and function, adaptations, life cycles and the role of insects in the world.