

2015 - 2016

Curriculum In A Nutshell



Excellence Without Exception

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What Your Child Will Learn In

**Grade
3**

Dear Families,

It is a pleasure to share our 2015-2016 *Curriculum in A Nutshell*, a brief overview of all areas of the Kindergarten through Grade 5 West Hartford Curriculum. This edition outlines the curriculum for your child's respective grade in school. Using basic skills and experiences as building blocks, the West Hartford Curriculum identifies what children learn at each grade level and represents a balanced and comprehensive program of all academic areas. Our curriculum is based on the Connecticut Core Standards and provides instruction on the essential skills and understandings necessary for success on both district and state assessments. The Connecticut Core Standards in literacy and math have been introduced in all grades K-5. The West Hartford curriculum also includes an integration of the visual and performing arts, physical education, world language (grades 3-5) and library media services.



This curriculum comes alive in the hands of our talented teachers who are committed to ensuring that our students reach their highest potential. We are dedicated to accommodating children's diverse needs, the way they learn, their experiences and interests, and to facilitating continuous educational growth. If you should have any questions about your child's curriculum, your classroom teacher is the best source of information.

No single document can fully explain the rich and complex nature of the school curriculum and instructional goals. We know that learning is optimized in a partnership with families, teachers, and schools. Working together, we can use your experiences as a family and our work in the classroom to create a respectful climate of academic success and joy for lifelong learning.

Sincerely,

Nancy M. DePalma, Ed.D.
 Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

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Language Arts

This year your child will be working to develop his or her understanding and mastery of Grade 3 Connecticut Core Standards for English-Language Arts. These standards integrate all aspects of Language Arts development and are categorized under Reading, Writing, Speaking & Listening, and Language. Your child's teacher will use a wide variety of instructional strategies and formats to help your child learn and progress toward mastery of these standards by the end of the school year.

Reading

- **Apply Phonics and Word Recognition Skills**

Know and apply grade level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.

Identify and know the meaning of common prefixes and derivational suffixes (e.g., re-, pre-, -er, -ing).

Decode multisyllable words (e.g., deliberate, flexible).

Decode words with common Latin suffixes (e.g., -able, -ible, -ence).

Read grade appropriate irregularly spelled words.

- **Read with Fluency**

Read on level text with appropriate text, prose and poetry with appropriate accuracy, rate and expression.

- **Identify Key Ideas and Details**

Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of literature and informational text; refer explicitly to the text as the basis for answers.

Recount stories, determine the central message, lesson or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key ideas in the text.

Determine main idea of a text, recount key details and explain how they support the main idea.

Describe characters in a story and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific concepts or steps in technical procedures in a text using appropriate time, sequence or cause/effect language.

- **Understand the Structure of Texts**

Determine the meaning of words and phrases distinguishing literal from nonliteral language.

Refer to parts of stories, dramas and poems using terms such as chapter, scene and stanza; describe how successive parts build upon earlier sections.

Distinguish your point of view from that of the narrator or a character in the story or the author of a text.

Determine the meaning of grade appropriate words and phrases in informational text.

Use text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to efficiently locate information relevant to a given topic.

- **Integrate Knowledge and Ideas Within and Across Texts**

Explain how specific aspects of an illustration contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story or text.

Compare and contrast the themes, settings, and plots of stories written by the same author about the same or similar characters.

Describe the connection between sentences and paragraphs in a text (e.g., comparison, cause/effect, first/second/third in a sequence).

Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic.

- **Read and Comprehend a Range of Texts with Appropriate Grade Level Complexity**

Proficiently and independently read and comprehend a variety of texts in the grade 2 – 3 text complexity range.

Writing

- **Write a Variety of Texts for Various Purposes**

Write opinion pieces that provide a point of view, include reasons to support that opinion and provide a concluding statement or section.

Write informative/explanatory texts that examine a topic, provide facts, definitions and details and provide a concluding statement or section.

Write narratives that introduce a narrator and/or characters, use dialogue and descriptions and provide a sense of closure.

- **Produce and Publish Clear and Coherent Writing**

Plan, revise, edit and use a variety of digital tools to publish writing with guidance and support from adults and peers.

- **Research to Build and Present Knowledge**

Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.

Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital resources, take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into categories.

- **Range of Writing**

Write routinely over extended and shorter time frames for a variety of tasks, purposes and audiences.

Speaking And Listening

- **Participate in Collaborative Conversations with Understanding**

Come to discussions prepared, follow agreed upon rules for discussion, ask questions to check understanding and explain understanding of the topic under discussion.

Determine main idea and supporting details of a text or information presented in diverse media and formats.

Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail.

- **Present Knowledge and Ideas Clearly**

Report on a topic, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant details speaking clearly at an understandable pace.

Create engaging audio recordings that demonstrate fluid reading at an understandable pace and add visual displays when appropriate.

Speak in complete sentences when appropriate to the situation in order to provide requested detail and clarification.

Language

- **Demonstrate Command of Conventions of Standard English**

Apply parts of speech correctly when writing and speaking.

Produce simple, compound and complex sentences.

Apply capitalization, punctuation and spelling when writing.

- **Use Knowledge of Language**

Choose words and phrases for effect.

Apply formal and informal uses of English.

- **Understand and Use Grade Appropriate Vocabulary**

Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases using a variety of strategies.

Demonstrate an understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

Acquire and accurately use conversational, academic and domain-specific words and phrases.

Handwriting

- Is introduced to Zaner Bloser cursive alphabet in fall.

- Learn, review and practice Zaner Bloser cursive alphabet.

Social Studies

Government and Civics

- Develops and understands decision-making, problem-solving, listening, speaking, personal and group interaction skills.
- Explain the importance of rules/laws and one's rights and responsibilities as a member of a school and community.
- Explain characteristics that help define culture (e.g., language, religion, clothing).
- Participate in collaborative conversations about social studies topics and texts.
- Present information with clarity, voice, and fluency and respond to related questions.

Geography

- Use symbols in map keys to identify cities, state capitals and the nation's capital.
- Identify the major natural, cultural and regional features of the United States, including a focus on Connecticut as a New England state.
- Use cardinal and intermediate directions (NE, SE, NW, SW) to define locations.
- Identify and define equator and the Northern and Southern Hemispheres.

History

- Describe, compare and contrast the culture of Native Americans with the American culture from the 1600s to the 1800s.
- Access, gather, and interpret information from a variety of sources.
- Create and present written and visual work to demonstrate an understanding of history and social issues.

Recognition of Religious Holidays

- Diwali/Divali, Dusserah/Durga Puja (Hindu)

World Language

Aiken, Braeburn, Bugbee, Charter Oak, Duffy, Morley, Smith, Webster Hill, Whiting Lane and Wolcott-Spanish; Norfeldt - French

- Learn to communicate in French or Spanish through oral expression.
- Learn the correct pronunciation of specific French or Spanish vocabulary.
- Develop listening comprehension skills in French or Spanish.
- Learn the nuances of verbal/nonverbal communication in French or Spanish.
- Develop cultural awareness and cultural knowledge.

A theme referencing the French/Spanish speaking world is explored through colors, geometric shapes, greetings, classroom language, basic classroom objects, days, months, alphabet, weather, season, clothing and fruits.

The cultural focus centers on French/Spanish-speaking Caribbean countries.



Mathematics

Our mathematics curriculum is based on the Connecticut Core Standards for Mathematics (CCSS-M) that define what students should understand and be able to do by the end of the year at each grade level. The Connecticut Core Standards for Mathematics have two key components:

- (1) **Standards for Mathematical Practice** – eight practices in which students engage at all grade levels
- (2) **Standards for Mathematical Content** - conceptual understandings and procedural knowledge and skills

The Content Standards at each grade level are grouped into domains (e.g. Geometry) and clusters within each domain.

Our instructional focus in Grade 3 is on four critical areas: (1) developing understanding of multiplication and division and strategies for multiplication and division within 100; (2) developing understanding of fractions, especially unit fractions (fractions with numerator 1); (3) developing understanding of the structure of rectangular arrays and of area; and (4) describing and analyzing two-dimensional shapes. To provide you with an understanding of your child’s mathematics learning, we have highlighted domains and clusters of standards for Grade 3 below. A comprehensive description of the Connecticut Core Standards for Mathematics is available at <http://www.corestandards.org/>

Mathematical Practices

- Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
- Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
- Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
- Model with mathematics.
- Use appropriate tools strategically.
- Attend to precision.
- Look for and make use of structure.
- Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

Key Fluencies

- Add/subtract within 1,000 using strategies and algorithms based on place value, properties of operations, and/or the relationship between addition and subtraction.
- Multiply/divide within 100 using strategies and algorithms based on the relationship between multiplication and division or properties of operations.
- Know from memory all products of two one-digit numbers.



Operations and Algebraic Thinking

- Represent and solve problems involving multiplication and division.
- Understand properties of multiplication and the relationship between multiplication and division.
- Multiply and divide within 100.
- Solve problems involving the four operations, and identify and explain patterns in arithmetic.

Number and Operations in Base Ten

- Use place value understanding and properties of operations to perform multi-digit arithmetic.

Number and Operations – Fractions

- Develop understanding of fractions as numbers.

Measurement and Data

- Solve problems involving measurement and estimation of intervals of time to nearest minute, liquid and volumes, and masses of objects.
- Represent and interpret data.
- Geometric measurement: understand concepts of area and relate area to multiplication and to addition.
- Geometric measurement: recognize perimeter as an attribute of plane figures and distinguish between linear and area measures.

Geometry

- Reason with shapes and their attributes.



Visual Arts

The Visual Arts Department promotes artistic development, fosters development of visual literacy, critical thinking skills, intellectual risk-taking and lifelong learning. The curriculum is grounded in the National Standards. The program strives to address the four components of Art Education in the following ways (suggested concepts to be addressed appear in *italics*):

Art History/Culture

Understand visual art in history and culture through studying artists such as:

- Vincent van Gogh (*Post Impressionism*)
- Henri Matisse (*pattern*)
- Alexander Calder (*mobile, stabile, sculpture*)
- Native American art (*symbolism*)
- Additional cultures, artists and art forms

Art Production

Produce visual expressions; design and communicate through art:

- Drawing: explore materials and concepts to develop a more personal style and attention to detail.
- Painting/Three-Dimensional Forms: continue to explore and develop skills with emphasis on individual expression.
- Experience a variety of media and techniques (possibly print making, collage and fiber art).

Art Criticism

- Make reasoned judgments about visual art.
- Apply and discuss appropriate elements and principles of design and visual arts vocabulary.
- Continue to build visual literacy skills.

Aesthetics

- Make informed opinions about visual art and is able to support the basis for forming those judgments.
- Learn to use art vocabulary to form judgments and opinions about works of art.

Music

Vocal Music

Singing is the foundation of all music skills in the elementary vocal music curriculum. Music skills are sequentially taught and divided into five content areas: melody, rhythm, reading and writing, part work and form, using grade appropriate songs, singing games and rounds.

Singing

- Sing songs independently; in tune, accurately, including partner songs and rounds.
- Sing expressively, with the appropriate dynamics, phrasing and interpretation.

Performing/Improvising

- Perform expressively a varied repertoire.
- Demonstrate part-work, e.g., simple rounds.

Reading/Notating

- Read and write simple rhythmic and melodic patterns, e.g., sixteenth notes, pentatonic scale.
- Identify symbols and traditional terms referring to dynamics, tempo and articulation.
- Identify simple form, e.g., first and second ending.

Listening/Evaluating

- Listen to and recognize simple forms and styles.
- Use terminology in describing and analyzing music, e.g., round.

Understanding Culture/History

- Identify ways in which other disciplines are interrelated with music.
- Sing songs and plays games that explore cultural diversity, e.g., Native American and West Indies.
- Put music into a cultural and historical context.





Science

Life Science

Heredity and Evolution

- Observe that organisms can survive and reproduce only in environments that meet their basic needs.
- Describe the structures and behaviors of plants and animals that help them survive in different environments.

Physical Science

Properties of Matter, Forces, and Motion

- Classify materials based on properties that can be identified and described through the use of simple tests.
- Describe the changes in some of the properties of materials due to heating or cooling.
- Recognize that position and motion of objects can be changed by pushing or pulling.
- Correlate the size of the change of an object's motion to the strength of the push or pull.
- Understand that the more massive an object is, the less effect a given force will have on its motion.

Earth Science/Science and Technology in Society

- Understand that Earth's materials provide resources for all living things, and perceive that these resources are limited and should be conserved.
- Recognize that decisions made by individuals can impact the global supply of many resources.

Scientific Inquiry

- Demonstrate a thoughtful and coordinated attempt to search out, describe, explain and predict natural phenomena.
- Participate in speaking, listening, presenting, interpreting, reading and writing about science.
- Understand that mathematics provides useful tools for the description, analysis and presentation of scientific data and ideas.



Library Media Services

The library media program in the elementary school provides the foundation for information and technology literacy skills and supports reading for lifelong learning. By the end of grade 5 students will:

- Identify what they need to do and find out to complete a task or assignment.
- Use the research process to solve problems and make decisions.
- Select and narrow or broaden search terms.
- Brainstorm a list of the possible information sources.
- Evaluate the relevancy and reliability of information sources.
- Use the navigational features of sources (e.g., indexes, table of contents, menus, site maps) to locate information.
- Take notes in their own words after reading, viewing, or listening to information sources.
- Cite information sources using the appropriate format.
- Create a product using appropriate information and technology that communicates ideas to others.
- Evaluate the final product by identifying what went well and what to improve in the future.
- Engage in a variety of literature experiences to make connections with text and images (e.g., illustrations, photographs, charts, maps, diagrams).
- Use a variety of strategies to select "just right" books.
- Demonstrate responsible use of library materials.



Physical Education

- Efficiently perform more complex locomotor and non-locomotor skills and combinations while maintaining good body control.
- Demonstrate more complex combinations of manipulative skills (e.g., striking) using a variety of implements and different body parts.
- Apply movement concepts (e.g., flow, force) to movements.
- Perform rhythmic patterns through creative or cultural dance movement, as well as through movement activities using manipulatives.
- Participate in a variety of moderate to vigorous physical activities that promote fitness and an understanding of the components as defined by the Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessments.
- Participate in movement tasks (both on the floor and on the apparatus) that require creative or critical thinking.
- Participate in cooperative adventure and group activities that require teamwork to achieve success.

Keyboarding

Students in grades 3-5 build on the keyboarding exploration skills developed in primary grades:

- Grade 3—Learn the home row and standard fingering
- Grade 4—Use the home row and standard fingering
- Grade 5—improve accuracy and technique

Proper technique and posture are emphasized at all grade levels.

Students in grades 2-5 are assessed in the fall and spring using a brief on-line keyboarding test to determine words per minute and accuracy.

Grade	Speed and Accuracy
Grade 2 (spring baseline only)	5 wpm @ 90% accuracy
Grade 3	10 wpm @ 90% accuracy
Grade 4	15 wpm @ 90% accuracy
Grade 5	20 wpm @ 90% accuracy

Students who meet or exceed these benchmarks will not require formal instruction but will continue to refine their skills through technology-integrated units as well as writing and performance tasks. An intervention model approach will be used for students in Grades 3-5 who do not meet the benchmark at their grade level. The level of intervention will vary depending on student needs.

All students in Grades 3-5 will have access to a district-wide, web-based typing program available for keyboarding practice at home and school. You can obtain information regarding home access from your building curriculum specialist.

Health

- Make healthy eating choices, including eating a variety of foods that are lower in added sugar, fat and sodium.
- Explain safe practices of using medicines, including over the counter medicines and prescriptions.
- Identify similarities and differences between one's thinking, actions, appearance and lifestyles and those of others.
- Develop conflict resolution strategies.
- Practice effective communication skills, including how to make conversations and ways to use assertive strategies when necessary.
- Practice using problem-solving strategies in social situations, such as resisting peer pressure and resisting the impulse to steal or lie.
- Demonstrate calming-down techniques in a variety of situations, including times when they are stressed.
- Identify ways to access help or support when needed from trusted adults, including if on the Internet.
- Practice using the Internet safely with an emphasis on netiquette.

West Hartford Community Relations police officers assist in teaching some of these objectives.

