



Open Window School

for children who love to learn

Curriculum Guide

Preparing Students for a Diverse and Changing World...

Open Window School students are prepared academically, intellectually and socially to face the demands of a changing world. We have the joy of working with exceptional children who exhibit extraordinary skills and talents. Our students develop a deeper understanding of advanced subject matter that enhances problem-solving, critical thinking, innovation and creativity. Designed to deliver an outstanding academic education, hallmarks of our program include:

- ~Solid foundation in math, language arts, science, and social studies
- ~Key learning experiences in the arts, world language, social skill development, emotional and physical health, as well as information and media literacy
- ~Challenge through acceleration, enrichment and choice
- ~Differentiated instruction that matches interests, learning styles and abilities to concepts and skill levels
- ~Small class size, low adult to student ratios, and small group instruction
- ~Inquiry based learning

Teachers use a variety of instructional strategies and approaches in the classroom that reflect the current research and best practices in gifted and talented education. Hands-on approaches tantalize and engage our children as they dig deep into topics and explore concepts. Students are provided opportunities to apply skills across content areas, extend learning to problem-based activities and interact with resources beyond the classroom walls.

Math

Working from the premise that “one size does not fit all” and, importantly, giving kids credit for what they already know, we found that *enVision* and *Prentice Hall Math* offer the necessary basic skills, explicit instruction in mathematical processes and problem solving, and are readily adaptable to the differentiation strategies our students require. The *enVision* program emphasizes twenty mathematical “big ideas” or conceptual underpinnings that provide cohesion across lessons, topics and grades. Teachers are prepared to deliver multiple levels of math instruction within a single classroom. *Prentice Hall* includes pre-algebra, algebra, geometry, trigonometry and pre-calculus. In middle school, students are placed in mixed-grade level groups to accommodate their needs and abilities. Teachers provide challenge, acceleration, and support based upon assessment so of their students.

Frequent monitoring of student progress is carefully woven in the curricular framework, providing teachers with information about students that will guide instruction. The K-4 program is organized in a way that facilitates fluidity in the level of instruction in all classes. It transitions directly into the middle school math curriculum which can be offered to students who are ready for more advanced instruction.

Language Arts

Reading, writing, speaking and listening come under the umbrella of language arts. Effective written and oral communication, reading to learn, and developing the human connections that are personally possible through speech are the cornerstones of all learning. Combine OWS's precocious thinkers with this strong foundation and the result is an amazing language arts program.

Students enter kindergarten learning about sounds, letters, and words. They develop along a continuum that prepares them to have a broad and deep understanding of informational and literary text. Instruction supports learners as they become responsible for reflecting on their skills and adjusting their comprehension and vocabulary strategies to become better readers. They discuss, reflect and respond to a wide variety of literary genres and informational text using specific textual evidence. OWS students revel in reading for pleasure and choosing books based on personal preference, genre or author.

The journey to writing proficiency begins with the use of pictures and print to convey meaning. Students progress until they have developed a strong personal voice in their writing which is often accompanied by humor, reflects strong opinions or is effectively persuasive. They use precise vocabulary in content-area writing. They experiment with complex sentence structures and varying leads and endings. Students can apply provided criteria for critiquing their own work and that of others. Writing becomes an effective vehicle for self expression and communication of ideas. OWS students hone listening, speaking and presentation skills as they move through the school. They expand observation skills and listening strategies to interpret, comprehend and analyze complex auditory and visual information. Student repertoires of oral presentation skills continue to increase as topics and available technologies become more complex. OWS students learn to communicate effectively academically and personally. They are fully prepared for the increased demands of the OWS middle school.

Middle school students continue to develop the advanced skills of fluent readers and discuss, reflect and respond to a wide variety of literary genres and informational text. Students experience extensive instruction and practice in various forms of writing and language mechanics as they become effective writers. Speaking and listening skills are taught across the curriculum through the presentation of projects, working with experts in the community, and a range of off-campus experiences and on-campus residencies.



Social Studies

What makes a civilized society? What is culture? Who bears responsibility in a community? These are just a few of the questions posed to OWS students in social studies. Open Window School is committed to developing responsible citizens in a culturally diverse and democratic society in an interdependent world. Students strive to understand their own power and responsibility as citizens of the world. They are prepared to make sound judgments, actively participate in sustaining a democratic society, demonstrate good stewardship of the natural environment, and contribute to the health and prosperity of their own communities.

OWS aligns our social studies curriculum with state and national standards which reflect a research based scope and sequence that is developmentally appropriate for our deep-thinking students. We have refined and expanded the topics studied at each grade level to meet the needs and interests of gifted and talented students. Instruction is delivered using a variety of strategies, experiences and simulations. They are skilled in inquiry, interpersonal relations, and critical reasoning which are all essential to the ability to gather, interpret, and analyze information. Students are able to engage in respectful and productive civic discourse, and to draw conclusions consistent with their own values and beliefs

The social studies component of middle school humanities explores history, geography, civics, government, and economic, beginning from the cradle of civilization. Students learn to think, question, and analyze like historians through short simulations, interactive classroom activities, visual discoveries and global studies. Students in middle school are developmentally ready to dramatically deepen their understanding of the world and its people. They are equipped to sharpen their skills of description and analysis, comprehend the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a culturally diverse democracy, and contribute to the common good. Respect for the values of a diverse and democratic society is fostered in our students and motivates them to safeguard their own rights and the rights of others and to fulfill their responsibilities as citizens in a democracy. Throughout the curriculum, a study of global problems and sustainability helps students understand the complexity of issues like population, poverty, consumption, and the environment.

We seek to instill in our students a commitment to civic participation. OWS social studies curriculum includes opportunities for students to understand and experience their own power to make a positive difference, through service, to their communities and the world. When students graduate from OWS they possess knowledge of history, geography, civics and economics, which are fundamental to students' ability to understand the world we live in. They are well prepared for opportunities to take Advance Placement courses in World History, U.S. History, and American and Comparative Government.

Humanities

Open Window School's humanities program for grades 5-8 integrates direct instruction in reading, writing, and communications with social studies, mathematics, the arts, the sciences and history. The humanities program develops advanced skills in academic literacy necessary for success in high school. We understand that middle school students are establishing ideas about their learning that will be with them for the rest of their lives. They are seeking both concrete and abstract experiences. Middle school students benefit from the hands-on, group projects, inquiry processes and dynamic ways of learning. Humanities classes build a bridge between the big ideas of society and the critical thinking fitting today's diverse and changing world.

Science

Our science curriculum asks students, from very young ages, to think scientifically, to ask questions, to utilize their keen observation abilities, to form hypotheses, to relish the sheer fun of experimentation, and to make the important connections necessary in the scientific process. To be a scientist comes very naturally to OWS students.

With science units from the Lawrence Hall of Science as the springboard for the younger grades and *Science and Technology Concepts* and *Prentice Hall Science Explorer* for the middle school, hallmarks of the OWS science curriculum include:

- ~Inquiry based, hands-on learning
- ~High interest topics of study
- ~Topics that are matched to developing cognitive skills of the learners
- ~Studies that are guided by “Big Ideas” and “Essential Questions”
- ~Intellectually rigorous content
- ~High tech science laboratory facilities



Our science program is led by teachers who are preparing their students for life in an increasingly complex scientific and technological world. Investigating concepts such as energy, patterns of change, variation, systems and interactions, atomic theory and chemical reactions, cell biology, genetics and climatic adaptations are the core of our program. Teachers constantly encourage students to look for the scientific patterns, relationships and interconnections of our world. Students become familiar with the natural world, its diversity and interdependence.

In addition...

Open Window School students are enriched by their work with different specialist teachers.

Library and Information Literacy reinforces the pleasure of reading and expose the children to global literature. Working with students in the Learning Commons, our librarian builds research and information skills as students move into the older grades. The program builds upon the concept that libraries are portals to information and life-long learning. Technology becomes a tool rather than a destination for OWS students and often dovetails with library research and other core subject areas. Students are taught the features and benefits of the technology at their fingertips and learn to use it effectively. The applied technology lab offers sophisticated opportunities to creatively build on the solid foundation of skills students develop in the younger grades.

Physical Education focuses on skills, sportsmanship and health at every grade level. Classes are conducted in a noncompetitive environment that encourages students to acquire healthy habits to last a lifetime.

Spanish classes introduce OWS students to the language and its cultures. Students learn basic sounds and vocabulary as they prepare for more rigorous language study in the older grades. Spanish is a core subject in the middle school.

Visual Arts intrigues and delight our students as they explore mediums of expression and experience success.



Drama classes develop poise, confidence and theatrical skills. All OWS artistic elements come together in annual grade level performances K-4, and elective classes 5th-8th. Teachers and specialists collaborate to bring the highlights of classroom units to the stage. Parents and students are enthralled by the results, culminating in cries of “Bravo” for all!

Music is offered to our elementary students K-4, and includes moving to the beat, historical studies, interpretation, singing and playing instruments. Students have the opportunity to participate in performance groups which include a recorder ensemble and choir.

These experiences complement and extend classroom learning and are intriguing and stimulating.

	Kindergarten	First Grade	Second Grade	Third Grade	Fourth Grade	Fifth Grade	Sixth Grade	Seventh Grade	Eighth Grade
MATH	<i>enVision Math Exemplars</i> Problem-Solving	<i>enVision Math Exemplars</i> Problem-Solving	<i>enVision Math Exemplars</i> Problem-Solving	<i>enVision Math Exemplars</i> Problem-Solving	<i>enVision Math Prentice Hall Math Exemplars</i> Problem-Solving	At the middle school level, students are placed in mixed grade-level groups. <i>Prentice Hall – Course 1, Course 2, Pre-Algebra, Algebra, Geometry, Algebra 2</i> <i>The Art of Problem Solving</i>			
LANGUAGE ARTS (Includes reading, writing, and communication)	Guided/Shared Reading Phonics Instruction Guided/Shared Writing: (Journals, science logs, reading responses, stories, poetry, etc.) D'Nealian Handwriting Speaking & Listening	Guided/Shared Reading <i>Junior Great Books</i> Phonics & Spelling Guided/Shared Writing: (Journals, science logs, reading responses, stories, poetry, etc.) D'Nealian Handwriting Speaking & Listening	Guided/Shared Reading <i>Junior Great Books</i> Phonics & Spelling Guided/Shared Writing: (Journals, science logs, reading responses, stories, poetry, etc.) 6+1 Trait Writing D'Nealian Cursive Speaking & Listening	Guided Reading Literature Studies <i>Junior Great Books</i> Vocabulary & Spelling 6+1 Trait Writing Form & Genre Writing Research Skills Grammar & Usage Speaking & Listening	Literature Studies <i>Junior Great Books</i> Vocabulary, Greek/Latin Roots & Spelling 6+1 Trait Writing/Writer's Workshop Form & Genre Writing Research Skills Grammar & Usage Speaking & Listening	Literature Studies <i>Junior Great Books</i> Vocabulary 6+1 Trait Writing Writer's Workshop Form & Genre Writing Research Skills Grammar & Usage	Literature Studies <i>Junior Great Books</i> Vocabulary 6+1 Trait Writing Writer's Workshop Form & Genre Writing Research Skills Grammar & Usage	Literature Studies <i>Junior Great Books</i> Vocabulary 6+1 Trait Writing Writer's Workshop Form & Genre Writing Research Skills Grammar & Usage	Literature Studies <i>Junior Great Books</i> Vocabulary 6+1 Trait Writing Writer's Workshop Form & Genre Writing Research Skills Grammar & Usage
SCIENCE TOPICS (Additional topics not included on the list may be added during the school year)	Exploring My Five Senses Solids and Liquids Investigating Insects	Balance & Motion Amazing Arachnids Air & Weather Penguins Coral Reef, & Learning about New Plants	Measurement Exploring Earth Materials Life Structures Electricity & Magnetism Our Solar System	Human Body Energy and Matter Physics of Sound Wonderful Water	Landforms Nature's Recyclers Models & Designs Chemistry Overnight Experience Islandwood	Solar Energy Populations & Ecosystems Environmental Detectives Levers & Pulleys Mysterious Machines Overnight Experience North Cascades Institute	Catastrophic Events Monster Storms Earth Science Force and Motion Terminal Velocity Overnight Experience Olympic Park Institute	<i>Brain Rules</i> Gravity & Newton's Laws Solar system Matter, energy & atoms Oceanography Overnight Experience Salish Sea Expeditions	Living Things, Cell Processes, and Energy Anatomy & Physiology Genetics Electricity & Magnetism Overnight Experience Costa Rica
SOCIAL STUDIES GLOBAL STUDIES	<i>Individual Development and Identity</i> Learning About Myself & My Classroom Community Foods We Eat	<i>Families</i> Families in Our Community Families in Other Places	<i>Communities</i> Our Community Communities Meet Their Needs and Wants	<i>Culture, People, Places & Environment</i> Cultures in our Community Our Native American Past Making Global Connections	<i>Washington State History, Geography and Government</i> Exploring WA Prior to Statehood Living in WA: Geography, Resources and Economy Being Citizens in Washington	<i>United States History</i> United States Colonization & Settlement (1600-1740) American Revolution (1754 – 1787) U.S. Constitution	<i>History Alive - The Ancient World</i>	<i>History Alive – The Medieval World</i> <i>Washington State History and Geography</i>	<i>History Alive- The United States through Industrialism</i> <i>United States History, Government, and Civics</i>
SOCIAL - EMOTIONAL SKILLS All grades have Middle School buddy experiences	<i>Responsive Classroom Positive Discipline Second Step</i>	<i>Responsive Classroom Positive Discipline Second Step</i>	<i>Responsive Classroom Positive Discipline Second Step</i>	<i>Responsive Classroom Positive Discipline</i>	<i>Responsive Classroom Positive Discipline</i> FLASH: Family Life & Student Health	<i>Responsive Classroom Positive Discipline Second Step</i> Customized Advisory Program Health FLASH: Family Life & Student Health	<i>Responsive Classroom Positive Discipline Second Step</i> Customized Advisory Program Health FLASH: Family Life & Student Health	<i>Responsive Classroom Positive Discipline Second Step</i> Customized Advisory Program Health FLASH: Family Life & Student Health	<i>Responsive Classroom Positive Discipline Second Step</i> Customized Advisory Program Health FLASH: Family Life & Student Health
SPANISH	<i>In grades Kindergarten-4th grade Spanish is an enrichment class. See specialist classes below for more information.</i> <i>Spanish is a core subject in 5th-8th grade.</i>					Pre-Foundations	Foundations	Intermediate/Advanced	Advanced/Advanced 2
						<i>iExpresate! Series</i> Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communities			
SPECIALIST CLASSES Music, Drama, Art, PE, Spanish, Library, Technology	Music (2x wk 25min) Drama (25 min.) Art (55 min.) PE (2x wk 25 min.) Spanish (2x wk 25min) Library (2x wk 25min) Technology (40 min.)	Music (2x wk 25min) Drama (25 min.) Art (55 min.) PE (2x wk 25 min.) Spanish (2x wk 25min) Library (2x wk 25min) Technology (40 min.)	Music (2x wk 25min) Drama (25 min.) Art (55 min.) PE (2x wk 25 min.) Spanish (2x wk 25min) Library (55 min) Technology (40 min.)	Music (2x wk 25min) Drama (25 min.) Art (55 min.) PE (2x wk 25 min.) Spanish (2x wk 40min) Library (55min) Technology (40 min.)	Music (2x wk 25min) Drama (55 min.) Art (55 min.) PE (2x wk 25 min.) Spanish (2x wk 40min) Library (25 min) Technology (40 min.)	Semester Drama (50 min) Semester Art (50 min) Library Learning Commons (open library time) Technology (2x wk 50 min) PE (2x wk 50 min)	Semester Drama (50 min) Semester Art (50 min) Library Learning Commons (open library time) Technology (2x wk 50 min) PE (2x wk 50 min)	Semester Drama (50 min) Semester Art (50 min) Library Learning Commons (open library time) Technology (2x wk 50 min) PE (2x wk 50 min)	Semester Drama (50 min) Semester Art (50 min) Library Learning Commons (open library time) Technology (2x wk 50 min) PE (2x wk 50 min)