



# **A Year in the Life of a PS11 Fifth Grader\***

\*The staff of PS11 has carefully planned for this coming school year. However, all great educators understand that even the best made plans need to be reflected upon, and edited depending on the needs of the students at any given time. While we do not imagine the scope of this year to be drastically different than we have planned, this guide should be considered a framework, rather than a specific and exact plan. We try to keep these pages as up to date as possible, but typos are inevitable. If you see an error, please send an email to [ps11slt@gmail.com](mailto:ps11slt@gmail.com). Thank you.

8/2011

## A TYPICAL DAY IN FIFTH GRADE AT PS11

### Welcome to Fifth Grade!

**School begins each day at 8:50am promptly.** Students who wish to eat school breakfast will be allowed to enter the cafeteria at 8:30am. Fifth grade parents and guardians will NOT be permitted to accompany their children to the cafeteria. All other fifth graders will enter through the playground starting at 8:30am, and will be sent up to their classrooms at 8:45am.

A sample day in fifth grade is provided below. Each class's daily schedule will differ due to scheduling, but all periods run the same length of time. Depending on unit foci, outside programs and classroom goals, studies may change. Students will have math, reading and writing every day.

### Sample Daily Schedule for Fifth Grade

8:45	Arrival (students go to classrooms from playground)
8:50-9:27	Morning Meeting/Word Study
9:27-10:30	Reading Workshop
10:30-11:22	Writing Workshop
11:22-12:22	Math Workshop
12:22-1:24	Recess/Lunch
1:24-2:16	Social Studies
2:16-3:08	Special Class ( <i>Music, Gym, Theatre, Science, etc.</i> )
3:10	Dismissal (pick up students from playground)

**Lunch and Recess:** Fifth grade students go outside for recess before eating lunch. During recess, teachers, coaches and school aides monitor students for an adult to student ratio of 1:20. Organized activities and free play options are offered. Be sure to dress your child appropriately as students go outside all year round. As a part of our community service commitment, all fifth graders will serve as Lunch Leaders for our first graders, helping them in the cafeteria and during recess. Fifth graders serve as Lunch Leaders for one week at a time on a rotating schedule.

**Dismissal:** Fifth grade students are dismissed from the playground. Families must wait on the sidewalk outside of the fence. Standing in the same spot each day will make it easier for your child to find you.

**Morning Program:** Each September, and at various times throughout the year, teachers identify students who could benefit from additional academic instruction in a small group setting. These students are invited to attend Morning Program where they will receive small group, targeted instruction. Morning Program will be held on Wednesday and Thursday from 8:00-8:50am. Students should be dropped off *before* 8:00am in the front lobby and will be sent upstairs to their Morning Program classroom. They will be sent directly to their regular classroom at 8:50am. *It is imperative that students are on time.*

**After School Program:** Students registered for the PS11 After School Program will be escorted to the cafeteria at 3:10pm by their classroom teacher. Students registered at other after school programs will be picked up by program employees in designated areas.

**Late Arrival:** All students arriving late for school (AFTER 8:45am) will enter through the eastern set of doors on 21st Street and must wait in line in the cafeteria to obtain a late pass before going upstairs to their classroom. Late students will not be permitted to enter a classroom without a late pass. Family members are not permitted to escort students to classrooms.

**Late Pickup:** Parents or guardians who arrive late for dismissal (AFTER 3:10pm) will find their child in the Main Office on the second floor. As there will not be staff members available to supervise children, if the Main Office is unable to contact you, your child may be taken to the NYPD 10th Precinct on West 20th Street.

## LITERACY CURRICULA

PS11 employs a research-based reading and writing curriculum developed by Teachers College Reading and Writing Project at Columbia University. The teacher-educators from this research and staff development organization are involved in long-lasting collaborations with teachers across the world. The Project has a deep and enduring affiliation with six hundred schools, and develops ideas that are foundational to literacy instruction. PS11 staff members attend Teachers College a few days each year for specific professional development seminars. In addition, PS11 has a dedicated staff developer who visits throughout the year to further the school's professional practice. *For more information on TCRWP, please visit their website: <http://tc.readingandwritingproject.com>*

### Literacy Assessments

We use a multitude of assessments to make sure we are constantly aware of where your child is performing and how we can best serve him/her.

**Formal Running Records:** Using the Teachers College method, students periodically read a leveled book one-on-one with their teacher, retelling the story, and answering both literal and inferential questions about the text. The teacher then records their reading accuracy, reading rate (words per minute) and comprehension in the student's *Formal Running Record*. At this time, their current reading level is determined.

**Conferences/Informal Running Records:** Teachers hold individual conferences with students as often as possible. Conferences are specific to each child and focus on the individual skills and strategies that the child may be working on. During conferences it is common that a teacher will keep an informal running record. This is to ensure that students are constantly being challenged.

**Spelling Inventory:** This assessment is administered three times a year: September, January and May. It is a list of spelling words that test students' knowledge of spelling patterns. This spelling inventory determines where a student starts, and continues working, during their word study time.

## READING CURRICULUM

Reading in fifth grade marks the culmination of all the amazing work PS11 students have done throughout the years, and the invitation to a life as a thoughtful and reflective reader. Students are expected to be "at the helm" of their own reading experience, seeking out texts that excite them, actively engaging in reading-based relationships with their peers, and making personal goals that reflect their knowledge of their own strengths and weaknesses as readers. Teachers act as stewards in this journey, connecting students with new and exciting material, creating a safe, collaborative environment which promotes taking risks, and challenges students to question assumptions and understanding of familiar texts.

This year is all about interpretation and synthesis. Readers learn new ways to find deeper meanings within and across books, within and across genres, and of the world around them. They work extensively with themes, seeing how they transcend the barrier of fiction and non-fiction, and understand why these themes have captured the imagination of writers throughout history and in contemporary writing. They study archetypes that show up repeatedly, and then begin to challenge those archetypes and discuss their relevancy to their own experience of the world. It is difficult, often uncomfortable, work. But it is uncomfortable in the way that true, meaningful learning should be: door opening, perspective shifting, and life changing.

### Units of Study in Reading (*subject to change*)

<i>Unit 1</i>	Launching Reading with Experienced Readers
<i>Unit 2</i>	Following Characters into Meaning
<i>Unit 3</i>	An Exploration in Non-Fiction
<i>Unit 4</i>	Non-Fiction Research Projects
<i>Unit 5</i>	Fantasy
<i>Unit 6</i>	Interpretation Text Sets
<i>Unit 7</i>	Test Sophistication
<i>Unit 8</i>	Reading in the Content Areas
<i>Unit 9</i>	Critical Reading: Power in Texts

*You will receive more in-depth information about what each unit entails during the beginning of year grade breakfast, and through monthly Classroom Newsletters.*

**Shared Reading:** Shared reading is when the teacher uses an enlarged text or class sets of texts to teach skills and strategies. Skills and strategies are based around self-monitoring for meaning while reading, accumulating information, developing thoughts around the big ideas and making connections to what we already know about the world and ourselves. The text is provided to each student so students can see and follow along in the learning process. Texts may include passages of books, letters, short stories, poems, advertisements, newspaper articles, songs or non-fiction materials.

**Interactive Read Aloud:** Reading aloud exposes students to books on and beyond their current reading level. This enables students to enjoy and appreciate the world of literature, while giving them a glimpse into their future reading lives. It is a way to expose students to cultural and social issues that they are faced with daily.

Teacher "think-alouds," which model sophisticated ways of interacting with a text in a transparent and meta-cognitive way, allow students to see the normally hidden process happening as mature readers experience a text. While very enjoyable, read aloud leads to rich conversation and reflection about both the literature and important worldly topics.

It also allows the teacher to model various styles of note-taking, graphic organizers, and other reader's notebook strategies that students can try in their own reading lives. Reading aloud is typically done in a whole class setting with time set aside for partnership discussion and independent reflection.

**Guided Reading:** Guided reading instruction happens with students reading at the same reading level. This time is used to introduce a set of skills necessary to move on to the next reading level. This instruction incorporates strong teacher support as students become comfortable navigating more difficult texts. Teacher supports include strong book introductions, vocabulary exposure, tools to support students with new reading skills and in-depth book discussions. During fifth grade, this type of instruction is most-commonly found during extended-day instruction and in book clubs.

**Strategy Group Instruction:** This is a time when the teacher works with a small group of students with the same needs. These students may not be on the same reading level, but they need the same work with specific readings skills and strategies. Here students are taught strategies to practice right then and there. They work within their own books so the work is authentic. Discussions ensue about the usefulness of the strategy and how it can be incorporated into further learning. Often students set goals during this time for how they will practice this strategy in their future reading. Based on need, strategy groups are commonly held 2-3 times on the same strategy so that it becomes a natural tool for the student to use while reading.

**Independent Reading:** Independent reading, at the heart of reading workshop, is the time of reading workshop when students are reading books on their appropriate reading level. It is crucial students spend this time (in school and at home) in their 'just right' books because this is when they practice their skills and comprehension. Students are expected to build up stamina so they are reading for about 45 minutes to an hour at a time. It is during this time that the teacher is conferring with individual students or small groups, providing tailored, targeted instruction. Students create reading plans to set goals and keep them on task throughout the week. Reading plans are to be filled out at the end of each reading session (both in school and at home).

**Book Clubs:** While reading the same book, students participate in conversations, using "accountable talk" to deepen their understanding of the text while also making them stronger thinkers and readers. Reading workshop will still include a mini-lesson, and independent reading, however book clubs give students an additional opportunity to interact

**Reading Plans:** Each individual student creates a reading plan each week. This plan is specific to each child and the layout varies depending on the types of books students are reading. Students plan out how many books/pages they will be reading each day, both in school and at home. This is a way for students to create reading goals for themselves and helps to increase stamina, responsibility and accountability. By the end of the week, each child is responsible to complete his/her reading as planned. If they are unable to finish their reading during a designated time, it is up to them to find the

time to make it up. This process can be difficult for the students at the beginning of the year, and will need the support to follow through with their plans; as time goes on however, they will become independent in the process.

**Word Study:** Fifth graders use a program called Words Their Way. It is a word study program that teaches students letter sounds with an emphasis on vowel sounds and patterns, diagraphs and blends, complex consonants, and prefixes and suffixes. Students are given a spelling inventory 3 times a year to assess their initial placement in the program and their progress throughout the year. Each week students are given a set of words. These words are based around a spelling pattern/rule, i.e. long vowel sound 'e' can be 'ea' 'ee' or a word that ends in 'e' (CVC-e; here).

Every day of the week students interact with the words in their sort in a variety of ways. On the first day, they become familiar with new words, identifying their common spelling pattern, as well as the words that deviate from that pattern. Additionally, the group these words in various ways based on different attributes, and familiarize themselves with the meaning of unfamiliar words. On the second day, students revisit the same words, but within a meaningful context, such as a using the words in context. On the third day, students will look in their own texts and "hunt" for other words that follow the same spelling pattern, On the fourth day, students use the words to play games (Password, for example), create visual models of words that show spelling, meaning, part of speech, etc, or write their own texts that use the words meaningfully. On the fifth day, students are assessed on their understanding, both of the words they studied, and of their knowledge of the spelling pattern.

## WRITING CURRICULUM

Fifth graders will learn to elevate their writing by improving the focus, elaboration, voice, and conventions with which they write. These skills will be taught across writing units.

## Writing Assessments

Several assessments are used to track where students are performing in writing. This helps the teacher determine how best to support a student's progress.

**Unit Rubrics:** At the start of every unit, fifth graders are provided with a rubric that lists the goals for the unit. The teacher explains the goals during the writing unit preview so that the students have a clear understanding of what will be expected of them during each unit. Some goals carry over into every unit and other goals are unit specific.

At the end of the unit, the students will use the rubric to score themselves on how well they met each of the unit goals. The student will then have to explain why they graded themselves the way that they did. Then the teacher will grade the writer using the same rubric. Compliments and suggestions for improving writing will be included for the writer to apply in future writing units.

**Conferences:** Teachers hold individual conferences with students as often as possible. Conferences are specific to each student and focus on the writer's need of skills and strategies.

**Spelling Inventory:** This assessment is administered three times a year: September, January and May. It is a list of spelling words that test students' knowledge of spelling patterns. This spelling inventory determines where a student starts, and continues working, during their word study time.

## Units of Study in Writing *(subject to change)*

Unit 1	Memoir
Unit 2	Interpretive Essay
Unit 3	Information Writing
Unit 4	Research-Based Argument Essays
Unit 5	Fantasy
Unit 6	Poetry
Unit 7	Literary Essay and Writing for the Test
Unit 8	Information Writing
Unit 9	Fractured Fairy Tales

**Writing Workshop:** Each writing period will start with a mini-lesson from the teacher. During this time the teacher will instruct the whole class on a writing technique that is not just appropriate to that unit of study, but to their life as a writer. Students will have the opportunity to engage this skill while still in a whole group; this is an opportunity for them to try it out before working independently.

**Independent Writing** is the time when students are working on their own stories. Students work within specific genres, but each individual student generates his/her own ideas. The writing process is a major focus in fifth grade. Students are taught to brainstorm ideas, test a few of those ideas out (by planning to see if there is enough information for a draft), write a draft, revise and edit that story and publish their writing into a final piece. Focusing on this process teaches students to plan, organize and maintain focus on one idea. In fifth grade, students become independent writers.

**Shared Writing** is a strategy used to allow students to apply the skills and strategies they are learning while still having support from the teacher and their peers. The focus of shared writing lessons is recently learned skills and skills that should be used consistently by writers. During shared writing, the teacher does the physical writing, but the students generate the ideas that lead to the sentences.

## MATHEMATICS CURRICULUM

The PS11 math curriculum is based on the *TERC Investigations* program, designed to create critical thinkers and problem solvers through a deep understanding of mathematics.

The *Investigations* curriculum is designed to:

- Support students to **MAKE SENSE OF MATHEMATICS** and become mathematical thinkers
- Focus on **COMPUTATIONAL FLUENCY** with whole numbers
- Provide substantive work in areas of rational numbers, geometry, measurement, data and early algebra —
- **AND THE CONNECTIONS AMONG THEM**
- Emphasize **REASONING** about mathematical ideas
- **COMMUNICATE** mathematics content
- Engage the range of learners in **UNDERSTANDING MATHEMATICS**

In addition to the *TERC Investigations* curriculum, teacher instruction and assessments are based around the *Common Core State Standards*. These standards can be found online at <http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards>

## Mathematics Assessments

In fifth grade, several comprehensive assessments are used to track where students are performing in math.

**Pre- and post-assessments:** Students are given an assessment at the beginning and end of each unit. This is a way for the teacher to gauge prior knowledge. Based on this assessment a teacher is able to tweak the curriculum or plan for small group and individual instructional time. Students are not expected to know what they are being tested on at the beginning of a unit; so if no skills are mastered, don't worry! All assessments are created by the teachers and address each expectation of that unit. At the end of the unit, the assessment is administered again. This time through students should be able to master all skills. For skills that are still not mastered, teachers will continue to work on those areas with students during small group and individual conference time. Assessment questions can come from the TERC curriculum/units; however, in many instances teacher have prepared most, if not all of the assessment based on common core standards and past test questions/material.

## Units of Study in Mathematics (*subject to change*)

Units are organized around similar math concepts in hopes that teacher communicate and make clear the “interconnectivity” between the math ideas and present them in a practical and more comprehensive light.

### Unit 1

- Identifying factors and multiples of a number
- Identifying prime and composite numbers
- Multiplying 3 digit by three digit numbers using stacking or the traditional algorithm
- Multiplying 3 digit by three digit numbers using the “break apart” method
- Solving 3 digit by 1 digit division by “stacking” or the

traditional algorithm.

- Solving 3 digit by 2 digit division by using the “Hangman” “Big 7” or “Partial Quotients” methods
- Checking your division work by working backwards or a second division method
- Estimating your product or quotient before solving

#### **Unit 2**

- Determining place value to the millions
- Adding by breaking apart one or both numbers (using numbers up to ten thousands)
- Subtracting by breaking apart one or both numbers (using numbers up to ten thousands)
- Adding using the traditional algorithm (stacking)
- Subtracting using the traditional algorithm (stacking)

#### **Unit 3**

- Converting fractions to percents (and vice versa)
- Finding equivalent fractions
- Simplifying and reducing fractions
- Adding and Subtracting fractions with like and *unlike* denominators
- Ordering and comparing fractions

#### **Unit 4**

- Identifying triangles based on sides and angles
- Identifying quadrilaterals based on sides and angles
- Measuring angles using a protractor
- Measuring line segments to the nearest  $\frac{1}{8}$  of an inch
- Determining the missing angle on triangles
- Determining the missing angle on quadrilaterals
- Finding the area and perimeter of a shape
- Identifying similar and congruent shapes
- Finding the ratio of similar shapes
- Plotting points on a grid
- Finding the lines of symmetry in a shape

#### **Unit 5**

- Determining place value to the thousandths place
- Comparing and ordering decimals
- Converting fractions/decimals/percents
- Adding and subtracting decimals
- Rounding decimals
- Multiplying decimals

- Dividing decimals
- Converting mixed numbers to improper fractions
- Determining percent of a larger group
- Determining ratio
- Multiplying fractions
- Dividing fractions

#### **Unit 6**

- Solving two by three digit multiplication
- Solving three by three digit multiplication
- Solving three by one digit division
- Solving three by two digit division
- Applying a remainder to real world situations
- Checking your work by using a different method to solve

#### **Unit 7**

- Reading a story problem and finding an appropriate algebraic expression for that situation
- Creating a story problem that represents an algebraic expression
- Solving for a variable
- Evaluating an algebraic expression when given the variable
- Explain, using full sentences, how you solve for a variable

#### **Unit 8**

- Determine the appropriate type of graph to create, given a set of data
- Creating a graph that accurately reflects a given set of data
- Creating a graph that includes all parts of a graph, such as, title, scale and labels for each axis
- Interpreting a set of data by comparing trends and determining variable increase and decrease
- Interpreting a graph by comparing trends and determining variable increase and decrease
- Interpret a set of data by determining future trends based on given information
- Determine the mean (average), median and mode using a given set of data
- Convert like measurement units given a measurement system (cm  $\rightarrow$  m)
- Make a line plot to display a data set of measurement

## SOCIAL STUDIES

Fifth grade students learn about a variety of interconnected topics related to the Western Hemisphere. Lessons are often interactive with students embarking on field trips, including one to Washington, DC, as well as engaging in projects and research investigations.

**Unit One:** Students begin the year by developing an understanding of the geography of the Western Hemisphere. They study the diverse physical and political landscapes of North America, Central America, and South America and learn how to read and interpret maps.

**Unit Two:** This leads into in depth study of early American history in which students explore events and concepts including European exploration, appropriation of land, colonization, different forms of government, roots and manifestations of revolution, and the legislation and documents that founded the United States government. This unit culminates with a trip to Washington D.C. in which students have the opportunity to explore the places and concepts they studied.

**Unit Three:** This unit examines the Westward Expansion of the United States. Students investigate and debate the causes, consequences, and justifications of such events as the Louisiana Purchase, the Trail of Tears, and the Gold Rush of 1849. Students have the opportunity to choose a lens with which to study these categories, including people and explorers, human interaction, obstacles and challenges, and transportation. They then approach this lens by looking primary and secondary sources such as diary entries, political documents, songs, and speeches and create projects throughout the unit that reflect what they have learned about the larger topic through their lens.

**Unit Four:** This unit rounds off our study of early United States history by looking at U.S. immigration in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. We use our vantage of living in New York City to understand the causes of and conflicts created by the swell of immigrants emerging on to the shores of America. The unit culminates with a large-scale project in which students have the opportunity to make connections between all of the events and concepts they have studied from the fifteenth to the twentieth centuries in U.S. history.

**Unit Five:** Finally, students broaden their understanding of the Western Hemisphere. They apply what they have learned about the role of geography on shaping nations, revolution, clashes between Native and European cultures and peoples, expansion, immigration, and the forming of and diverse varieties of governments in the United States to other countries in the Western Hemisphere. Students choose a country or region to complete a case study of. They do extensive research and complete a project that showcases their understandings of another country in the Western Hemisphere as well as the connections that they have made between this country and the United States.

### Essential Questions, Understandings and Information

#### **Topic: Western Hemisphere Geography**

Essential Questions:

- How does geography shape the lives, cultures, and experiences of people in different regions?

Understandings/Information:

- The Western Hemisphere has very diverse geographical features that both unify and distinguish nations and regions from another.
- Maps can be used to represent various features of a location, including but not limited to physical characteristics, borders, capitals, literacy rates, and climate.

#### **Topic: The Road to Revolution: Early U.S. History**

Essential Questions:

- What are the causes and consequences of colonization and subsequently, revolution?
- Native American peoples lived in established communities and distinct and varied cultures throughout the United States for thousands of years. They had relationships and interacted with one another.

Understandings/Information:

- Europeans were motivated to explore the United States for “gold, God, and glory.”
- There were many motivations for settlement, including religious freedom, political circumstances, and economic incentives/desires.

- Interactions between settlers and Native Americans varied throughout the land, but were largely exploitative and detrimental to Native American peoples.
- Relations between the British and their subjects in America were complex, but often tense. Reasons for this include taxation (Stamp Act, Quartering Act, Sugar Act), events such as the Boston Massacre and a physical and ideological distance that grew between the king and his subjects.
- There were different forms of government that existed, including democracy, republic, and monarchies.
- The “founding fathers” had the unique opportunity to sculpt a new government and created a representative democracy laid out in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The new nation had a unique government for many reasons, including its checks on power and egalitarianism.
- Not all Americans were free during this time period. The Constitution was hypocritical in many ways, especially when considering the experiences of Native Americans and African Americans.

### **Topic: Westward Expansion**

#### Essential Questions:

- What were the causes, consequences, and justifications of expanding?
- How do physical and cultural landscapes change when one group of people decides to expand into other people’s domain?

#### Understandings/Information:

- Thomas Jefferson’s Louisiana Purchase, enabled by events on the European stage, was both unprecedented and the spark of Westward Expansion.
- The concept of Manifest Destiny arose as a pivotal justification of expansion.
- The journeys west were extremely dangerous and people braved them primarily for the prospect of starting a new beginning, owning great stretches of land, and economic opportunity.
- This mass migration had terrible repercussions for Native Americans, as highlighted by the Trail of Tears.
- Innovation in this time period exploded with inventions such

as the steam ship and the creation of a transcontinental railroad changing the way people in this time communicated, traveled, and lived their everyday lives.

- Immigration began to increase in this time period with immigrants from Ireland and China doing much of the hard labor required of this time period.

### **Topic: Immigration and Industrialization**

#### Essential Question:

- How does immigration alter the political, economy, and culture of a region?

#### Understandings/Information:

- Immigration to America was caused by political and humanitarian strife in other parts of the world as well as the desire for people to improve the quality of their lives.
- Living as an immigrant in the United States was often very difficult. Immigrants faced terrible living conditions, exploitative working conditions including child labor, and social persecution.
- There was significant tension between new arrivals and older generations of Americans.
- Immigrants made significant contributions to the United States.

### **Topic: Latin America**

#### Essential Questions:

- How do geography, economics, people, and key events connect to shape a region?

#### Understandings/Information:

- Maps can help us to understand the culture, physical qualities, and political boundaries of Latin America.
- The primary geographic features of Latin America include beaches, islands, jungles, pampas, and mountains.
- The native peoples of South America had similarities between and differences from the peoples of North America.
- The Incas, Mayas, and Aztecs were the largest Native American groups and had distinctive religions, social classes, cultures, economies, and traditions.
- Explorers in Latin America were motivated by mostly “gold, God, and glory.”

- Exploration and Spanish settlement had devastating repercussions on Native peoples.
- “New Spain” was established with specific features including encomiendas, churches, governments, and villages.
- Independence movements took wing throughout Latin America, especially in Argentina, Dominican Republic, Brazil, and Puerto Rico. Key figures helped shape these movements and the governments and societies that were created afterwards.
- Foreign influence played a key role in both the formation of and ruling of new governments throughout Latin America.

## SCIENCE

Fifth graders utilize the Science Lab two periods per week, learning to work collaboratively on science experiments. The students will be engaged in several activities in each unit, which incorporate observing, comparing, predicting, recording and analyzing data, and drawing conclusions.

## TESTING

All 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students are mandated to take NY State English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics Examinations. These exams are each given over a three-day period in late spring. Students who do not pass either the math or ELA exam may be mandated to attend summer school and may not be promoted to the next grade. Information on these exams can be found on the NY State Department of Education website: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/apda/>

## SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Classroom participation is a major factor in student learning. Students gather information, clarify their thinking, question new ideas, contribute their thoughts and opinions, and respond to others.

Through strong accountable talk, all fifth grade students will:

- Practice active listening
- Use precise language
- Take turns speaking

- Ask relevant questions for more information or clarity
- Share information, thoughts and opinions
- Support their ideas with personal experiences or literary text

## HOMWORK

*Each teacher's homework system varies. Specifics will be given during the curriculum breakfast at the beginning of the year.*

Fifth graders receive Daily Planners from PS11 during the first week of school, and will copy their homework into them each day.

Homework should be expected Monday through Thursday, along with 45 minutes of independent reading daily (including weekends). During this reading time, students should be focused and completing the reading work they are also doing in class (post-its, chapter grids, etc.) Reading **MUST** be recorded on the reading log.

Homework assignments will consist of reading, writing, math, and often an additional subject. This homework should take an additional 20-25 minutes per night. Homework is a review of what has been taught in class; students should have a clear understanding of what they are doing. If there are questions about homework email the teacher or send a note with your child, please do not just leave it blank.

Students will also receive holiday and summer homework packets to keep their minds fresh and active over breaks.

## SPECIALTY CLASSES

Each school day, fifth graders participate in a different specialty class or "Special", taught by certified staff members.

**Music:** Fifth Graders start music second semester due to their busy schedule. They review note values and treble clef note reading skills, in preparation for Middle School. They also start work on their *Moving On* celebration songs. Those who choose to participate in the Fifth Grade Production participate in morning and afternoon play practice.

**Theatre:** Fifth graders will create dynamic characters. They will explore writing and performing monologues. All students will have the opportunity to be part of the cast or crew of the 5th grade musical.

**Gym:** The first part of the year is spent engaging in various athletic activities outside and in the gym. Students continue to learn the rules of gym and how to be responsible in a very physical environment. In the beginning of November as the weather gets colder, students will resume aquatics, perfecting swimming techniques and stamina. Once a week they will swim as a class in our indoor pool. Students may bring a bathing suit and towel to school at the beginning of the year. They may either leave these at school, where they will be washed on weekly basis, or bring them from home each week.

**Computer:** Fifth grade students will study and research a number of classroom subjects using the computer as a tool to augment their studies. We will be using a wide selection of software including: *PowerPoint, Keynote, MicroWorlds, Scratch, Word, Pages, iLife*, and of course many Web 2.0 programs on the Internet.

**Art:** The Art curriculum immerses students in a variety of artistic styles and techniques, including drawing, painting, oils, ceramics, mosaics and collage. Students learn the importance of expressing themselves through various forms of art.

**Dance:** Fifth graders will begin with a Hip Hop and Body Percussion focus, creating their own definitions of dance, working toward a "class dance." They'll analyze and discuss master dance works, and compare and contrast the vast array of dance genres.

## OUTSIDE PARTNERSHIPS

**Rosie's Theater Kids:** While working with *Rosie's Theater Kids* staff members, fifth graders learn musical, theater and dance vocabulary. The students apply their knowledge of this vocabulary through weekly rehearsals where they sing, dance and move all over the stage. Each class perfects and then performs their own choreographed song and then the entire grade combines for a rousing finale. Every fifth grade loves to go to Rosie's rehearsal

**Ballroom Dancing:** Fifth graders gain intense cultural enrichment by participating in ballroom dancing rehearsal. A dancing expert comes in several times a week to teach the students the meringue, waltz, foxtrot, swing, and rumba. Through these dance rehearsals, students learn about the origins and evolutions of these dances. After months of practice, fifth graders have the opportunity to audition for the ballroom dancing team that competes in a citywide competition.

## FIELD TRIPS AND SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

**Washington DC Trip:** In May, students and teachers embark on a journey to our nation's capital for two days and one night. This trip is done as the culminating event to an in-depth study of the structure and history of American Government. During the two days in DC, students see inside the Capitol Building, the Supreme Court, the National Archives, the Smithsonian Museum, the Lincoln Memorial, WWII Memorial, FDR Memorial, and Arlington National Cemetery. Students stay in a hostel with teachers, administrators, and parent chaperones. This is an exciting and educational experience for everyone, and a wonderful time for teachers and students to build relationships that last for the rest of the year.

**Fifth Grade Musical:** Each year our fifth graders rehearse and perform a full-blown Broadway Junior version of a stage musical. Students rehearse after school and on Saturdays to prepare for this incredible performance.

**Track and Field Meets:** Fifth graders have the opportunity to participate in the Department of Education *Citywide Track and Field Series*, along with third and fourth graders. All students are invited to attend two all-day track meets, typically held in April or May. The meets take place at *Verizon Track and Field* on the Lower East Side. It is a great opportunity to introduce students to competition and the training required to perform at their maximum level. Track practice is offered during the month of April on Mondays at 8am. After the first two meets, select students will be invited to compete in the *Manhattan South Championship, Manhattan Championship, and NYC Championship*.

**Field Day:** Each June all first, second, third, fourth and fifth grade students participate in a full day of field day activities. Students are divided into cross-grade and cross-classroom teams. Field day takes place outside in the big yard and on 21st street.

**Enrichment Cycle:** Fifth graders participate in two 10-week enrichment cycles, during which they participate in an activity of their choice along with a mixed group of 3-5 students for one period a week. Enrichment activities change each year with our teachers' interests. Previous offerings include Comic Book Making, Trash with Panache, Kids Care Club, Basketball, T-Shirt Design, Anthropology, Gallery Visits and Tap Dancing.

## SCHOOL COMMUNITY

**Kind & Gentle:** The PS11 community revolves around a philosophy called "Kind & Gentle". More than just words, "K&G" means all the actions and language of "doing unto others what you would have them do unto you." Throughout the school, there are clear expectations for students to behave in a kind and gentle way towards others within our community and beyond. Students are encouraged to maintain this attitude towards others throughout their years at PS11. Some examples of ways teachers foster K&G in the classroom include: using kind words, complimenting one another, and picking a secret K&G and being extra kind to that person all day or all week.

**Family Friday:** One Friday morning each month is designated as "Family Friday". All families are invited to come into the classroom and take part in activities that reflect an element of the school day. This is a great opportunity for families to see all the amazing work that is going on in the classroom. Activities in the past have featured reading workshop, art projects, Family CookShop, publishing celebrations and poetry centers.

**PS11 Garden:** Students will have the opportunity to work and learn in our amazing vegetable and flower gardens all year. Throughout the year, food from our garden will be harvested and served in our lunchroom.

**SLT and PTA Events:** Throughout the year, PS11's School Leadership Team (SLT) and PTA sponsor community-building events, as well as family workshops that support parents as partners in their children's education. You will find information about these events on the PS11 website, in the monthly Classroom Newsletter, and in flyers coming home in your child's home folder.

## COMMUNITY SERVICE AND CITIZENSHIP

We believe very strongly in community service at PS11. Throughout the year students will be engaged in activities that will benefit our local, national and global communities.