

# PROGRAM OVERVIEW AT-A-GLANCE



## A Quick Overview

The fourth grade year at Park Maitland School is a year that marks the transition from childhood to pre-adolescence. It allows students the opportunity to learn more independence and confidence, both socially and academically. As they become more abstract thinkers, fourth graders start to look more toward the outside world. They are able to think empathetically and respond deeply to societal and global issues fostered through their involvement in our Junior Student Ambassador Leadership Program. Park Maitland School encourages the multiple aspects of this growth by focusing on time management, independent study skills, research skills, and perseverance.

Furthermore, the essential integration of technology throughout all disciplines allows many opportunities for practical hands-on 21st century learning, interdisciplinary projects, and cooperative learning experiences. An outstanding new feature on the fourth grade schedule is the Design Thinking enrichment class, opening doors that teach our digitally native students to utilize devices as an academic doorway, rather than a frivolous time warp.

With the needs of every child in mind, daily curriculum is also enhanced through an intentional focus towards developing the 4Cs: creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration. These competencies are nurtured and built upon in a carefully crafted continuum throughout each Park Maitland student's journey, ultimately preparing him or her to be a productive asset in a global society.

**Evidences of the 4Cs at this level include assignments and tasks across our curriculum where the fourth grade student will do the following:**

### Build Creativity

- Value the creative process as a way of coming up with the best idea
- Seek out critique from peers, teachers, and experts, as well as apply feedback to his or her creative process
- Demonstrate an increased level of sophistication and ability to evaluate and discuss why one idea has greater merit than another
- Utilize accidental discovery to prompt spontaneous exploration

### Build Critical Thinking

- Use multiple modes to articulate and reflect on the Design Thinking Process
- Take pride in both the process and product of his/her work
- Modify initial questions and ideas based on self-reflection and critique
- Show empathy as a learner and creator
- Identify open-ended problems and propose complex solutions





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## Build Communication

- Attend to appropriate forms, conventions, and styles to convey information
- Organize, analyze, and synthesize information to communicate new understanding
- Use a full range of expressions and combinations to impact an audience
- Communicate complex ideas clearly and effectively by creating or using a variety of digital objects, such as visualizations, models, or simulations
- Participate in a classroom culture that seeks out and generates respectful and meaningful critique

## Build Collaboration

- Engage with group members as a way to add value to mutual understanding
- Work to solve problems and resolve conflict within a group without teacher prompting
- Encourage members of a group with constructive feedback and empathetic language
- Use collaborative technologies to work with others (peers, experts, or community members) to examine issues and problems from multiple viewpoints

## Course Descriptions:

### Language Arts: Reading and E.S.W (English, Spelling, and Writing)

The language arts curriculum continues to promote a lifelong enjoyment of reading and writing. We support the students as they use both of these subject areas to expand their critical thinking skills. In reading students find themselves answering and, more importantly, creating probing questions in response to their texts. Building skills in inference is also pivotal in this rigorous component where students realize that reading is oftentimes about what is not printed on the page.







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### English, Spelling and Writing

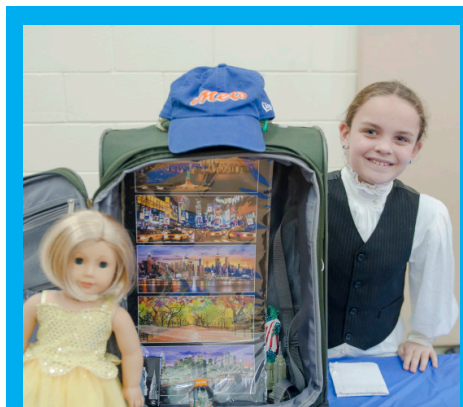
Creativity continues to be an important aspect in forms of writing projects in the fourth grade. We realize that this type of imaginative writing is only as powerful as the words you have available to express yourself. As such, the students are exposed to rich vocabulary through the "Vocabulary Workshop" program. Literary and research skills are also emphasized through research paper writing. Finally, verbal communication weighs in as just as important as written communication; therefore, students are given the opportunity to develop public speaking skills and compete in school and county speech contests.

### Math

Math in this year shifts gradually from concrete experiences to more abstract mathematical application. Students investigate mathematical relationships in arithmetic, geometry, graphing, measurement, and probability. To match this more elusive type of expression, real-life problem solving techniques are developed and emphasized. Students build computational accuracy and increase critical thinking skills by participating in manipulative, cooperative learning strategies, and a multi-sensory approach to gaining knowledge. Learning is enhanced through Ted Talks, math competitions, and an innovative interior design project which connects subject across our curriculum areas.

### Science

The fourth grade science curriculum continues to foster excitement and interest toward science and discovery. Students relate their knowledge of science concepts and theory to their everyday experiences and personal lives. Critical thinking skills are developed by exercising a variety of problem solving skill inquiries and working in cooperative and tactile group discoveries. Students are inspired to develop as 21st century learners through the use of technology as a research and discovery tool for problem solving throughout life. They also gain valuable experiences as researchers, presenters, and problem solvers by competing in the school-wide annual "Dr. Alan Saffran Science Expo" event. Special highlights for the year include a hands-on gem and mineral mining lab and a visit to the Kennedy Space Center.





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### Social Studies

Our social studies program teaches children about their role as state and national citizens. It seeks to develop curiosity and awareness of the relationship between people and their environments and helps our students understand how past events influence the present as well as the future. To orientate students with the characteristics they see everyday, focus is given to the study of the history and geography of Florida and America. This learning is made relevant by a field trip to St. Augustine and an annual performance of the musical play, "La Florida." In another Park Maitland trademark festivity, students become engaged learners by taking on the role of "travel agent" and presenting their research on a chosen state. Parents and fellow students are welcome visitors!

### Enrichment Classes

Emphasis on the education of the whole child is extended through a variety of outstanding enrichment classes which celebrate the talents and passions of each student. These courses are all taught by highly talented and experienced teachers who inspire and engage their students in a variety of ways.

**Physical education:** Each child is challenged to increase physical awareness of their body through the development of psychomotor, cognitive, and affective skills. The collaborative aspect of P.E. also enables students to learn about the benefit of teamwork and sportsmanship.

**Swimming:** With an increased awareness of safe practices around water, each student is challenged according to his or her individual abilities to both improve stroke techniques and swimming endurance. Equal attention is given to each of the four competitive strokes to allow every student to shine in their favorite while developing balance in all to complete the Individual Medley.

**Drama:** During this course, a focus on improvisational acting will bring a new element of communication to each student's repertoire. This unique practice of mixing critical thinking and spontaneous dialogue spurs creativity and is simply fun! Lessons include comedic games, imaginative story lines, and impromptu public speaking.

**Music:** The fourth grade students further ignite their love of music by working on the mastery of theory, which will make eager musicians of this energetic group. Much of the year will be spent preparing to present "La Florida," a production based on Florida's history and filled with musical flair and humor.

**Visual Arts:** Continuing their journey in the Artyology program, students are inspired to create their very own scratchbooks from "scratch" and fill them with various works of art. The focus artist in the fourth grade is David Hockney, whose landscape art sparks discussions into color, perspective, and texture.





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### Enrichment Classes (Cont'd)

**Computer:** This course aims to build on students' digitally native status. Learners will practice varying concepts from proper keyboarding skills to utilizing Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, and additional software to support cross curriculum projects.

**Spanish:** Students will exercise their language muscle in order to learn and retain Spanish. This immersion in language ensures a mastery of personal introductions, classroom vocabulary, and basic travel communication.

**Writing Lab and Vocabulary Workshop:** Focused attention is given to the art of producing creatively written compositions, ranging from essays to interviews. Fourth graders will continue to work on self-editing and will be introduced to the critique process offered through peer editing. Additionally, this course supports collaborative projects with other disciplines.

**Design Thinking:** Students are challenged to grow in their 21st century skills of collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity as they cultivate their use of Design Thinking and Project Based Learning. A foundational project in fourth grade is the Rice Cake Packaging Design project. Students learn how to use the Design Thinking Process and the 21st century skill of collaboration to work in teams to engineer a packaging device. Their aim is to send a rice cake through the mail without it breaking.

