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Introduction

Dear Lower School Families,

We send this program description to you with pride. It is in a very real sense an expression of Trinity’s mission, which is a call to inspire independence and a love of learning in each child, to build self-confidence, and to develop individuals who have the skill and desire to contribute to their community.

Our curriculum offers integrated resources that are meaningful and built on the belief that children learn best when they are engaged and actively involved. In addition, we encourage our students to honor Trinity’s rich tradition and its attention to ethical matters because we know that the early years of learning are important ones in developing positive and productive attitudes and dispositions towards learning and life.

This document represents many hours of conversation, collaboration, and teamwork.

Best regards,

Trinity Lower School
The Lower School

K – 4

The Lower School program carefully considers all aspects of a child's development: cognitive, emotional, moral, physical and social. We believe that children can best acquire a rich body of knowledge and the skills needed for future learning through a curriculum that is developmentally appropriate and that builds upon itself year by year. It is our hope that our curriculum is an expression of Trinity's mission, which is to inspire a love of learning, to build self-confidence, and to foster in our students the ability and desire to contribute to their community.

We realize that the first years of a child's academic life are crucial ones in establishing a positive attitude toward school and life and in generating an enduring passion for learning. We value a young child's natural desire to learn through creation and self-expression. We strive to build upon our students' natural curiosity, while instilling in them a spirit of cooperation, a respect for others and for their ideas, a strong moral foundation, and a satisfaction in personal intellectual growth.

Classroom instruction is complemented by weekly participation in a variety of special subject areas. These include Spanish, library, science, technology, music, art/sculpture/ceramics and physical education. Although these disciplines are separated for discussion in this guide, the Lower School program is perceived and planned as an integrated whole.

Our curriculum is the result of on-going conversations among faculty and administration. As such, it reflects our tremendous respect for Trinity's rich academic heritage and our deep involvement with current educational practices and philosophical thought. It is a document that will continue to grow and evolve.
Kindergarten

The primary assumption of the Kindergarten program is that learning is meaningful and long-lasting when it is based on a child’s experiences, and when it arises from that which the child can understand. We provide our Kindergarten children with opportunities to observe their world, gather information, and formulate conclusions in all academic disciplines.

The first year at Trinity is a crucial one in building self-confidence, independence and responsibility. Forming friendships, dealing with a variety of social situations, and discovering the joy and excitement of learning in a challenging but nurturing environment are primary goals. Although a large body of measurable skills is acquired in Kindergarten, it is important to note that less tangible achievements are of equal value. Children grow in their commitment to tasks, learn to work independently, and learn to respect and appreciate the ideas of others as well as building on their sense of right and wrong. Not incidentally, they learn to navigate their way through the school with a sense of self-assurance.

Language Arts

The language arts program provides rich and varied experiences in each of the four interrelated language skills: listening, speaking, writing and reading. We recognize that there are many ways in which children learn how to read. Our program builds on what the children already know about oral and written language and takes into account each child’s learning style, interests, motivation and level of maturation. Carefully structured activities involve the children in functional language experiences and provide opportunities for literacy development in a stimulating and non-pressured way.

Creative dramatics, block building, "sharing time", and outdoor play are some of the ways Kindergartners learn to formulate ideas and communicate with increasing confidence, clarity and richness of vocabulary. Critical thinking is expanded through guided group discussions and informal questioning, as is the ability to make associations, sort through details, and focus on the main idea. Placing labels around the room, having the children make lists and charts, and providing time for writing and reading messages and letters demonstrate to Kindergartners that language is purposeful. Daily story time develops children's appreciation of books and learning, while increasing comprehension and providing exposure to varied language patterns, vocabulary and writing styles. Group readings of enlarged print books (Big Books) sharpen auditory discrimination skills, help develop phonic awareness and a sight vocabulary and direct children’s attention to more complex reading strategies related to comprehension. Classrooms are well equipped with stimulating material for independent reading at various levels. Games and activities offer practice for memory development, phonics, visual perception, auditory discrimination and motor skills.

We also provide the children with daily opportunities to express themselves on paper. This may take the form of a picture that tells a story or it may include letters, partial words, or full words, depending on a student’s readiness. The continuum of skills is appropriately wide at this stage. With practice, the children become increasingly independent and comfortable experimenting with language and constructing rules of spelling in the context of their own interests and experiences. Kindergartners are taught the correct formation of all the letters, based on a phonics program called Wilson Fundations, which continues through third grade. **We discourage parents from seeking tutors for children to increase their**
literacy levels prematurely. Reading readiness is developmental and should not be forced. Our ultimate goal for Trinity students is to develop, and maintain, a love of reading.

Mathematics

The mathematics program provides experiences for students to use materials that allow them to explore, formulate, test, discuss, and construct numerical concepts. Students come to see the usefulness of math and its relevance to everyday situations through a wide variety of activities suited to their age, readiness and interests. Materials used include Cuisenaire rods, unifix-cubes, geo-boards, pattern-blocks and attribute blocks, iPads, as well as other everyday objects.

Children address challenging practical problems and are introduced to concepts in the following areas: numbers, one-to-one correspondence, attributes and sets, numeral reading and writing, classification, comparisons, measurement, geometry, spatial perspective and relations, and place value. They are also introduced to the concepts of equality, addition, and subtraction, and to the symbols used to communicate this information. Children continuously strengthen their skills in estimating, making connections, discovering and creating patterns. These skills help to develop the logical and the flexible thinking needed in problem-solving. As with reading, we strongly discourage parents from seeking tutors or classes for children to memorize their math facts through methods that do not emphasize exploration and conceptual understanding first. We strongly believe that students need to have a grasp of underlying mathematical concepts before being asked to recall the facts at rapid speeds. As with reading, it is our goal to instill in our students, a love for and confidence in mathematics.

Social Studies

At Trinity, we consider social studies to be the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence. It is our goal to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world. Our social studies program is rich and multifaceted, encompassing an array of topics that can be categorized in the following strands: Sociology/History, Socioeconomics/Economics, Geography, Civics, and Religion.

The basis of our social studies program is the idea that conversations and exploration stimulate children’s curiosity about the world around them. The overall topics of study—Basic Needs and Identity—are meaningful and directly relevant to Kindergarten children.

The social studies program forms the core of the entire Kindergarten curriculum, integrating language arts, mathematics, science and the arts. For instance, when we focus on how people need food to survive, we might take class trips to a farm, a local restaurant, and an apple orchard. Related class activities may include the following: discussions about where our food comes from and how farmers grow produce, the relationship between cultures and the foods eaten by people around the world, the ethnic makeup of our classes and sharing of family food traditions, mathematical comparisons of the weight of apples and pumpkins, an interview with a store manager, art projects that encourage creativity and develop fine motor abilities, cooking projects that provide experiences with measurement and also build skills in cooperative decision making. Just as important, our students become confident in their ability to research, try out
ideas, share ideas and pursue curiosities, and accomplish challenging tasks. Creativity and curiosity are encouraged and fostered.

While the acquisition of new knowledge is important, our program is primarily oriented around the development of concepts, such as the idea that there are similarities and differences among people everywhere, that they are interdependent, and that they are responsible for their environment. Through a combination of field trips, guest visitors, books, discussions and hands-on activities, the classes explore the elements that make up our social existence.

The Kindergarten social studies curriculum also examines an individual’s identity and how it is shaped by one’s interests, experiences, beliefs, customs, families, and environment. Identities are fluid; they are always changing and transcending. There is a large focus on individuality and core values; some values explored are respect, courage, collaboration, gratitude, consideration, and honesty. Through stories, class discussions, games, role-playing, and reflection, Kindergarten discussions delve into each student’s perception of these values as well as the impact our actions have on others and the community in which we live and learn. As a school that value social awareness and justice, Trinity Kindergarteners are also exposed to the terms ally and advocate, along with introductory discussions about the terms stereotype, ethnicity, and race. These terms are explored on a multi-faceted and age-appropriate level. As students progress through the Lower School, they will discover and learn deeper and more complex understandings about the meaning and significance behind such powerful words.

Social-Emotional Development

The Kindergarten program is oriented in the development of interpersonal skills. Crucial among these are: understanding and respecting others, being aware of similarities and differences, and learning to cooperate and negotiate. Introductory studies of feelings, personal space and of family composition provide the vehicle for this exploration. Much is said in the media about preventing bullying behavior. We pride ourselves in our ability to address these issues in both an organic and explicit manner. We are often complimented on the kind ways children treat each other at Trinity. Our classroom social-emotional curriculum is further strengthened by our weekly chapel program.
Grade 1

Grade 1 is an exciting year. The children are now familiar with the physical layout of the school and more accustomed to the daily routines. At the end of the Kindergarten year, the three classes are divided into four smaller Grade 1 sections, which facilitate a more individualized focus on the teaching of reading, writing and math. We aim to build a solid foundation of the basic skills as we continue to cultivate the children’s natural curiosity. This is intended to help and inspire them to become more academically independent. In all activities and lessons, we encourage students to use their creativity to enhance their learning. As such, our hallways and classroom walls are filled with examples of the students’ literary, scientific and mathematical artistic explorations.

Language Arts

The primary goals of the language arts program in Grade 1 are to promote a love of reading, to help our students appreciate reading as a source of both information and pleasure, and to give them the skills necessary to become good readers. Our program is designed to accommodate a predictably wide range of needs from the beginning readers to the independent readers.

Instruction takes place in whole group, small group, and in one-to-one settings. Children are exposed to a variety of reading materials, including classic and contemporary works from children's literature, as well as selections from various reading series. Informational texts, chapter books, and poetry are all used for explicit reading instruction in whole class and small group reading episodes. Teaching materials and strategies are many and varied, to accommodate the range of learning styles, and they are aimed at using and building upon the students’ various strengths and enhancing their existing repertoire of strategies. We include formal work in phonics, spelling and word recognition through a program called Wilson Fundations. Building upon the pre-existing individual strengths of our students, we expand their range of reading strategies so they can approach new material with growing confidence and independence.

Our writing program complements our reading program, as a child’s first successful reading experience often comes from being able to read his or her own written and spoken words. By exploring language, students learn about their own thinking and about how to make their thoughts accessible to others. As such, there is a continued focus on correct formation of letters with the goal of increasing the writing fluency. The children enjoy a variety of teacher-directed and open-ended writing experiences. First graders respond to writing prompts in notebooks, and in Writing Workshop sessions, they engage in writing about topics that are entirely self-chosen. Many of the writing activities are introduced with a mini-lesson about a particular writing strategy, after which students are encouraged to explore this strategy on their own. The students also make and record observations, write letters, and engage in beginning research activities. The children are encouraged to experiment with various writing forms, such as poetry and How-To books. Our Grade 1 authors are encouraged to share their stories with the class in a reflective and supportive atmosphere.

The context of the children’s own writing provides us with ample opportunities for elucidating and reinforcing the basic conventions of our language. We use children’s developmental spelling as a springboard into the beginnings of standardized spelling by noting patterns through the use of word families and through the use of formal reinforcement work with beginning, ending, and medial consonants.
and vowels. In each class, we build a spelling list of common sight words; these words are reinforced both in simple dictation exercises and in students’ daily writing.

**Mathematics**

Mathematics is an integral part of everyday life in Grade 1. Building upon mathematical skills and conceptual explorations begun in Kindergarten, the students are encouraged to continue to use manipulative materials to discover patterns and relationships and to discover the uses of grouping as a way of working with larger numbers. We begin by exposing students to physical representations of numbers as amounts, then move towards graphic images of these values, and finally make the connection of these to the abstract symbols of numbers and operations. The children are encouraged to take risks as they apply their knowledge and skills to experiment with various solutions to open-ended tasks. Students are asked to explain their problem-solving strategies so that their mathematical thinking becomes clear to them. In this way, the process and the thinking become as important as the end result. Students are also exposed to a systematic problem-solving technique that serves as a precursor to the Bar Modeling method that is introduced in Grade 2.

Our Grade 1 math curriculum includes the following: solidification of place value concepts to the hundreds place, flexibility with number relationships, written addition and subtraction of whole numbers minimally to twenty and beyond as children are ready, counting and grouping, and continued work on place value, and word problems. The students participate in a variety of non-standard and standard measurement activities, tell time to the hour and half hour, solve problems that involve US monetary values of dollars and cents, and explore simple geometry. Arithmetic concepts are presented and reinforced with appropriate iPad applications; educational games and tie-ins to literature are frequent.

**We strongly discourage parents from seeking tutors or classes for children to memorize their math facts through methods that do not emphasize exploration and conceptual understanding first.**

**Social Studies**

Building upon the Kindergarten curriculum of Basic Needs and Identity, the Grade 1 social studies theme explores Community and Identity. The goal of the Grade 1 social studies program is to help students understand that forming groups is a basic human need and that groups have identities and particular functions. We begin the year with a look at animal habitats, focusing particularly on the communities that animals create in tide pools and forest environments. A large emphasis is placed on exploratory discussions about classroom community needs and responsibilities at this early stage in the school year. Mid-year, we shift our emphasis to human habitats and homes, using our school community and neighborhood as focal points. In our study of the Trinity School community, we learn about the history of the school, the physical plant, and the many people involved in helping the school operate. We examine the cooperative efforts of individuals and societies as they construct various types of shelters and communities, and discover how the resulting structures express both physical and artistic needs. An essential goal of this program is to move students toward being able to independently make choices that promote a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment. Explorations are enhanced with literature, hands-on projects, and field trips.
As a continuation of social justice discussions begun in Kindergarten, first graders explore the terms ally and advocate more deeply, along with more in-depth discussions about the terms stereotype, ethnicity, and race. These terms continue to be explored on a multi-faceted and age-appropriate level. As students progress through the Lower School, they will discover and learn deeper and more complex understandings about the meaning and significance behind such powerful words.

Social-Emotional Development

Developmentally, first graders are moving beyond a primarily egocentric view of the world. Through stories, role-playing, class discussions and direct teaching, we foster respectful and kind treatment toward members of our immediate and extended community. Throughout the year, our conversations focus upon navigating the normal ups-and downs of friendships and being community members.
Grade 2

Grade 2 marks the beginning of the transition out of the early childhood years. Grade 2 students are ready to start building upon the firm foundation of skills they have acquired and developed in Kindergarten and Grade 1. While we recognize that children are individuals and that they develop at different rates, we know that second graders are able to assume a more active role in becoming responsible and independent students. We continue to emphasize individual strengths while enlarging each student's repertoire of strategies and approaches to foundational skills. As in Kindergarten and Grade 1, we allow children time to artistically explore each area of the curriculum, using their creativity and natural curiosity to great advantage. It is wonderful to see the strides the children make as they become more confident with their growing skills.

Language Arts

The basic aim of the Grade 2 language arts program is to further enhance each student's ability and desire to listen intently, to speak articulately, to read fluently and to write clearly. Growth in any one of the four modes of communication is often influenced by individual developmental factors and a wide range of achievement levels is both normal and ever-changing.

As in Grade 1, reading instruction is taught using methods and settings that complement the children's varied learning styles. We firmly believe that students derive the greatest benefit from being exposed to a diverse range of reading experiences, and therefore utilize methodologies from a variety of carefully researched programs, tailored to meet the needs of our students. Students continue to read in small groups, as a whole class, and in one-on-one situations. Reading selections are chosen from a wide variety of high-interest materials, in the form of fiction and informational texts, that represent a broad spectrum of developmental and readiness levels. The children are encouraged to actively observe, view, listen, talk, reason, question, discuss, interview, comment, report, reflect, predict, evaluate, create and share their views on the material they are reading. Supplemental activities reinforce specific skills that have been introduced through the readings. We continue to provide opportunities for all kinds of artistic and expressive literary extension projects. Chapter books, poetry, and genre studies (such as biographies) help the children to expand their understanding of reading for pleasure as well as for information.

Our students participate in many writing experiences. They keep journals and/or diaries, they have regular Writing Workshop lessons, and they conduct beginning levels of research writing both in social studies and in independent projects. We encourage the children to use writing as a tool for communicating their thoughts and ideas in all areas of study.

Grammar, punctuation, and editing and organizing skills are taught within the contexts of the children's own writing in order to make these rules clearer and more meaningful. Formal reinforcement, increased practice, and the use of writing as a springboard into learning in a broader context begin to bring our students to a greater understanding of the conventions of print. Spelling is presented in a variety of ways; both individualized (within the confines of individual writing experiences) and in a more general, structured approach. Second graders continue to learn about phonics and spelling through a program called Wilson Fundations. The students learn to recognize blends, digraphs, suffixes, syllable types and word families.
Mathematics

The Grade 2 math program relates math to everyday life experiences whenever possible. We continue to build upon the conceptual and practical skills mastered in Grade 1, with the intention of assuring greater depth and complexity of understanding of number sense. (For instance, the relationships between addition and subtraction are discussed to promote flexibility in thinking about mathematical concepts and operations.) The groundwork in grouping and place value done in Kindergarten and Grade 1 helps the children explore double-digit addition and subtraction with regrouping. Students are also introduced to multiplication, division, and basic fractions through interesting activities that help them apply the concepts to real life situations. Our students are taught important math concepts including the properties of numbers, geometry and spatial relations, time, measurement, money, patterns and relationships, and problem solving. Explorations take place in whole class and in small group situations, as well as on an individual basis.

The children work with manipulative math materials, use iPads, and play games to develop and increase mathematical understanding and computational skills. They are presented with opportunities to solve both structured and more open-ended tasks independently and with group members. We collect data and construct a variety of diagrams and graphs in order to both understand and present some of the mathematical concepts in a visual way. We use a variety of mathematical methods and teacher-created materials, as well as published materials for both presentation and reinforcement. As with all areas of learning, we strive to tailor our program to approach learning from many different angles.

Writing is also an important part of our math program. Using drawing and writing to explain the strategies used to solve problems help our students to clarify their comprehension of concepts, learn from one another, and verify their own thinking. The use of iPads to explore and practice math concepts is frequent and meaningful. Additionally, students are introduced to a problem-solving technique called Bar Modeling, which allows them to extract information from increasingly complex word problems and systematically draw models to arrive at a solution.

We strongly discourage parents from seeking tutors or classes for children to memorize their math facts through methods that do not emphasize exploration and conceptual understanding first.

Social Studies

The main focuses of the Grade 2 social studies curriculum are the concepts of Interdependency and Identity, taught through the lens of the Native Americans of the Northeast Woodlands. Building upon the Grade 1 theme of Community, the students work both independently and in groups to gain a deeper understanding of how communities are groups of people that depend upon one another to survive and thrive. This curriculum is enriched through trips, the investigation of artifacts, the viewing of films, and the use of our library resources. Our Native American study culminates in an interdisciplinary performance that integrates their understanding of Native American culture and history, literature, singing, dancing, acting, and the playing of musical instruments. Arts and crafts are also an integral part of the Native American study.

In connection to this social studies theme, the students also make a connection between community members’ rights and responsibilities to their own roles as citizens of various communities—the classroom, Trinity School, New York City, and beyond. An increasing focus on social justice and awareness accompanies these discussions, with more intricate discussions about the terms categorization, stereotype,
Additionally, students participate in a year-long community service partnership with the Westside Community Garden that integrates social justice, science, and their Native American study. As students progress through the Lower School, they will discover and learn deeper and more complex understandings about the meaning and significance behind a variety of social justice concepts and the importance of being good citizens.

Social-Emotional Development

The topics of fair treatment of community members continue to be explored through literature and activities that provide positive models of behavior for the children to emulate. Classroom teachers engage students in conversations about conflict resolution and friendships throughout the year. In addition, every fall, the school psychologist leads Mindfulness classes during which students learn mindful breathing techniques and explore the topics of compassion and empathy through read alouds and projects. Toward the end of Grade 2, classroom discussions evolve around the diversity of family structures.
Grade 3

Grade 3 is a year of great leaps as children move from a focus on the acquisition of essential skills that dominate instruction in the early years to an emphasis on the application of those skills. Although there is still ample time devoted to skill acquisition in reading, writing, and mathematics, our aim is to guide students to see skills as tools that enable them to gain information about the world around them, to understand literature more deeply, to ask essential and probing questions, and to begin to direct their own learning. During this year, each at an individual pace, our students move into the middle years of childhood.

Language Arts

The Grade 3 language arts curriculum continues to encourage and support in each child a love of literature and varied modes of expression, both written and spoken. Its aims are to increase and strengthen the skills brought to the writing process, and to help students use their growing abilities in reading and writing to work successfully in other disciplines; including social studies, mathematics, and science. Throughout the Grade 3 year, growing fluency in reading enables students to accurately read directions and exercise newfound independence in the learning process. Some put it this way: In Grade 3 the emphasis shifts from learning to read to reading to learn!

The heart of the reading program is daily instruction in literacy: reading, phonics and grammar, discussing and writing about literature. The texts that students read, which are primarily novels and biographies, are chosen for their literary merit and for the diversity of their characters and settings. While there is an emphasis on more in-depth and sophisticated comprehension skills, children are also guided in the development and improvement of appropriate decoding skills and facility in oral reading. Time is also devoted to independent silent reading, to reading with peers in small groups, and to listening to books read aloud by the teacher. Accompanying all of these reading episodes are conversations about story, characters, and authors’ craft.

The Grade 3 writing curriculum includes both personal writing and assigned expository writing. Students write in all aspects of their third grade experience. For example, they write about their own experiences in personal narrative pieces, they engage in a journal writing project related to their social studies investigation of the Great Wave of Immigration, they write answers to comprehension questions, they write about their discoveries and understandings in math, they write persuasive essays on topics about which they feel passionately, and they react in writing to powerful scenes in literature. There is always a dual emphasis on writing clearly in the student’s own voice, and on continuing to master the mechanics of writing. Spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure are taught and reinforced throughout the year. In addition, cursive handwriting is taught in Grade 3. Beginning mid-year, writing requires “all cursive – all the time”.

Mathematics

The Grade 3 math program strengthens students’ understanding of numbers, their ability to apply problem solving strategies, and their independent grasp of computational skills. Students are encouraged to develop flexible, efficient, and accurate strategies to apply the concepts, skills, symbols and vocabulary
associated with mathematics. While learning mathematics, students are actively engaged and work with a variety of materials that help them more deeply grasp new and complex concepts. Higher-order thinking skills such as logic, discovering patterns, and making connections are emphasized, in conjunction with learning efficiency with procedures and techniques. This diverse approach helps develop their conceptual understanding of mathematics while continuing to focus on the foundational skills they need to address increasingly complex problems.

The Grade 3 mathematics program emphasizes developing a deep understanding of multiplication and division with a focus on mastery of facts through the nines tables. Students’ understanding and skill in the areas of fractions, geometry, measurement, mental computation are deepened, and they begin to engage in algebraic thinking and multi-step problem solving. Students continue to achieve proficiency in whole number computation (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division) through regular practice and reinforcement. Additionally, they have the opportunity to work independently and in collaborative groups to investigate a variety of mathematical concepts that help deepen their understanding of place value, estimation, measurement, and pattern recognition.

Children are given frequent opportunities to demonstrate their understanding both verbally and in writing. The use of iPads to explore and practice math concepts is frequent and meaningful. Additionally, students continue to practice a problem-solving technique called Bar Modeling, which allows them to extract information from increasingly complex word problems and systematically draw models to arrive at a solution. Students are frequently encouraged to work in small groups, which allow for reinforcement or enrichment of particular skills with a smaller teacher to student ratio.

We strongly discourage parents from seeking tutors or classes for children to memorize their math facts through methods that do not emphasize exploration and conceptual understanding first.

Social Studies

The Grade 3 social studies program focuses on the themes of Movement and Identity. By exploring their own identity as well as learning about the identities of those around them, students begin to understand that history is can be learned from multiple perspectives, experiences and stories. Through the study of migration and immigration at various points in history, students explore the theme of Movement—both physical movement such as immigration and the Great Migration, as well as social movements through studies of Civil Rights activists.

Independent research, discussions and field trips help students gain a deeper understanding of the complexity of the immigrant’s plight. Third grade partners with members of our community who have immigrated to our country. This partnership puts immigration squarely within the child’s world, allowing for intellectual imagination and direct empathy. Following the focus on the Great Wave of Immigration, third graders learn about the Great Migration, which ultimately led to the Harlem Renaissance. They embark on a study of the Harlem Renaissance as a period of cultural, social, and artistic explosion that took place in Harlem between the end of World War I and the middle of the 1930s, ending in an inspirational grade-wide dance performance.

Additionally, third graders devote a number of class discussions to the concept of “Thinking globally and acting locally.” By empowering students to apply their knowledge of the governing principles of community rights and responsibilities, we encourage them to begin to independently use their strengths, talents, and interests to advocate for themselves and for others as well, thus creating a natural connection to our evolving social justice curriculum. Students at this age are more emotionally able to discuss terms
such as advocate, ally, categorization, stereotype, ethnicity, and race at a deeper level, with more thought about their own responsibility as active members of a larger society.

Social-Emotional Development

Continuing to build on the work begun in earlier grades, we focus on the development of caring and accepting attitudes within the school community through skits, literature and discussions about teasing and bullying and respect for one another's differences and similarities. Health classes and our culminating media literacy curriculum focus on the skill of decision-making in the real world. Additionally, students participate in a year-long Mindfulness curriculum taught by the school psychologist.
Grade 4

Grade 4 students strengthen and consolidate skills acquired in the earlier grades in reading, writing, critical thinking and mathematics. Through the Grade 4 curriculum, students gain independence in locating, analyzing, and using information. The curriculum assumes that students have mastered basic skills, and that they are curious about other cultures and times. Also, the curriculum assumes their readiness for challenging work across the curriculum.

Language Arts

The Grade 4 language arts program emphasizes the appreciation of literature and the acquisition of advanced skills in reading comprehension, research, and fluency. Students read a variety of novels, poetry, and informational texts in various content areas. While literal comprehension and recall of facts are not ignored, there is a growing importance placed on inferential and evaluative thinking: the ability to establish a main idea, to place ideas in sequence, to draw conclusions and make predictions, to analyze character and plot development, and to support one's arguments with details gleaned from the text. The independence gained in using reading as a powerful tool, begun in Grade 3, gains momentum in Grade 4 as students learn to follow printed directions and to locate information in the text and in captions, illustrations, and graphs. Time is also devoted to polishing expression, clarity, and inflection in oral reading.

Children study and experiment with different genres of writing and they build their writing skills through assignments in expository, descriptive, creative and narrative writing. The Grade 4 writing curriculum continues to stress the development of ideas in clear, well-structured sentences and paragraphs. Fourth graders learn to write paragraphs with a central idea, a topic sentence, and supporting sentences. Formal teaching of spelling and grammar is continued, as well as an expectation to independently apply these skills to their daily work. The cursive handwriting that was taught in Grade 3 is utilized throughout the fourth grade school day, to provide opportunities for practice and application.

Mathematics

The Grade 4 program reviews, strengthens, and extends the student’s understanding of a range of areas of mathematical concepts, and lays a strong foundation on which to build the child’s confidence in his or her ability to solve problems in those areas. Areas of focus in Grade 4 include achieving fluency with multi-digit multiplication and division algorithms; developing a deep understanding of fractions and fractional concepts, in-depth explorations in geometry, and applying basic mathematical concepts and skills in advanced problem solving.

Students are taught a variety of approaches for solving multi-digit multiplication problems. These strategies give students a solid understanding of how and why the standard multiplication algorithm works prior to being taught the algorithm. A similar approach is used for division as the students complete long division problems using a hands-on approach before moving to the pencil and paper algorithm. These strategies deepen the students understanding of the base-ten number system and allow them to more easily apply these strategies in other areas of mathematics. A deep understanding is an integral part of the Grade 4
curriculum. Fractional concepts including equivalency, addition and subtraction, mixed numbers, and finding fractional parts of a set are practiced and reinforced throughout the year.

In geometry, students analyze the attributes of two and three-dimensional shapes, lines, and angles. They use these foundational skills to define properties of geometric shapes and discover that some shapes can belong to more than one group or category. Measurement activities including the ability to calculate the area of regular and irregular two-dimensional shapes are also a focus.

Throughout the curriculum, problem solving strategies are discussed and practiced, and a continuation of the Bar Modeling strategy is applied. Children are given frequent opportunities to communicate their understanding both verbally and in writing. Beginning concepts of algebra are introduced through the use of the Hands on Equations program. Finally, in an effort to encourage students’ interest and enthusiasm for math, we offer an optional math club once a week, during which students work on solving challenging problems in small groups.

Social Studies

In Grade 4, students embark on an interdisciplinary study of the complex origins and rich history of New York City and the United States. Over the course of our study, students grapple with the following essential questions: How do geography and natural resources affect development of civilizations? What motivates people to explore and colonize other lands? How do people, laws, technology, and beliefs shape a society? Through an initial exploration of the Hudson River, students learn about the impact that geography and natural resources have on the development of a civilization. Furthermore, students learn about the encounter between Native Americans and European explorers, as well as the establishment and development of New Amsterdam, discovering how contemporary New York is shaped by its Dutch and British roots. Students analyze the ways in which power, government, and ideas shape communities. Furthermore, in Grade 4, students study the profiles of Changemakers in order to understand that one of the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship is to uphold just laws and help change unjust practices. In doing this, students engage in meaningful conversations about contemporary activism and social justice issues.

The development of effective research skills is an essential part of the Grade 4 social studies curriculum. Through guided, independent research and expository writing tasks, students acquire basic research organizational skills such as note-taking, framing of essential questions, reading for information, and planning and presenting their findings. Finally, students apply their understanding by evaluating the current issues facing New York City and imagining the role they could play in shaping its future. Students present their research findings and propose solutions to real world problems in a grade-wide Future Fair.

Social-Emotional Development

A strand of the Grade 4 social studies curriculum concerns social and affective issues. Through the use of literature, discussions and activities such as role-playing, and a multiple week study of Growth and Development, children are introduced to a range of topics that involve their social, emotional, and physical growth. Some of the topics of focus in our social emotional curriculum are establishing responsible community roles as leaders of the Lower School, appreciating varied family structures, the social constructs
of gender and race, and other aspects of identity development. Our goal is to foster greater appreciation for, and understanding about, the similarities and differences that exist among us.

Fourth graders also participate in a year-long relationship with the Manhattan Children’s Center, a nearby school for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Integrated with their reading of the books Wonder and Rules, students learn about children with learning and developmental differences in a real world, personalized context.
Special Subjects

Science
Science is a collaborative discourse among those who study and theorize about the natural world. Trinity’s science program will prepare students to engage in conversations about scientific issues and ideas. Students cultivate this ability by:

• learning the language of science through a rigorous program in a variety of disciplines
• asking questions, thinking critically, and considering multiple interpretations for their observations
• conducting experiments, analyzing data, and reading scientific literature to seek explanations

In developing these skills, students will understand that science is a rich and evolving discipline that continually expands our knowledge of the world and our understanding of the way it works.

Kindergarten
At Trinity, even our youngest students begin to learn science by doing science. In our efforts to minimize transitions during the first year within the Lower School, we do not require our Kindergarten students to travel to the science lab. Students meet in half groups once per seven day cycle and perform a sequence of hands-on inquiry based projects chosen to complement the themes of “Basic Needs and Identity” from the Kindergarten Social Studies program.

As natural investigators, Kindergarteners devise questions, make predictions, and offer explanations for observed phenomena. Organized around the concepts of Earth, Air, and Water, the children test their ideas through experimentation. Self-expression and the ability to communicate their ideas to one another as they learn are central to their exploration of both scientific concept and material.

Earth
The children are introduced to animals that live in soil. Bess Beetles are analyzed for their ability to complete strength tests and climb ramps with different textures. Red Wiggler worms are studied within their habitat of the Lower School Science Compost Bin. Kindergarten scientists build structures of varying materials in order to see which will be able to withstand an “earthquake” shake table.

Air
The children are introduced to the properties of air as well as the concepts of gravity, lift, thrust, and drag when studying the physics of flight. As part of an engineering design challenge, Kindergarten scientists build and launch stomp rockets. The properties of sound and light are introduced within the context of air as a medium.

Water
The children are introduced to the different properties and states of water, the water cycle, the importance of the conservation of water as a natural resource, animals that live in water (such as interactions with a crayfish) and buoyancy.
Grade 1

In Grade 1, students begin to work in the Lower School Science Lab one session per seven day cycle. The children refine their observation and recording skills through the use of drawing. In nearly all of the class activities, Grade 1 scientists are asked to observe and record their discoveries and share them with classmates during discussions.

Dovetailing with the Grade 1 Social Studies themes of “Identity and Community”, first grade scientists look more deeply at Animal Classification, Animal Behavior, and Form and Function.

Beginning with reptiles, the children interact with the Lower School Science Lab’s snake. During our study of mammals, the students focus on the human body. When studying the Digestive System, the children participate in a “taste test” with Trinity’s very own nutritionist and head chef and learn which part of the body these foods support. While studying the Circulatory System, the students utilize the lab’s collection of stethoscopes.

Later in the year, first grade science students embark upon an intensive study of insects in which the lab’s Madagascar hissing cockroaches debut and culminate in the children having the opportunity to “Adopt-a-Mealworm”. Then, students are able to observe the mealworm’s life cycle at home and continue to conduct scientific investigations in the Mealworm playgrounds that they have designed and constructed. Additionally, Grade 1 scientists hold the distinction of incubating and hatching chick eggs as part of their study of birds. At the conclusion of the year, the children study individual animal skulls. Based upon the features of its mouth and teeth, the students make inferences about each animal’s diet and behavior. After learning to organize animals based upon their attributes and behaviors, first grade scientists create "Skull Sketchbooks."

Central to Grade 1 science is the building and maintaining of a tide pool in each homeroom. The children study properties of water including weight, evaporation, and displacement. The aquarium is then stocked with organisms that they collect from a field trip they take to Calf Pasture Beach. The children learn about the ecology of a tide pool and how to maintain it in their homeroom. The tide pool aquaria provide a broad base for related projects and activities in all areas of the curriculum from art to mathematics.

Grade 2

In Grade 2, students begin to work in the Lower School Science Lab two sessions per seven day cycle. Grade 2 scientists are able to investigate content in greater depth and sustain interest in a topic over a longer period of time. During these sessions, students participate in a vast array of hands-on and interactive laboratory investigations.

Botany

Coinciding with the second grade’s study of the Northeast Woodlands second grade scientists begin their study of botany by investigating the questions, "What does a seed need in order to sprout?" and "What does a plant need in order to grow?" The children plant seeds in soil and document their growth from seed to plant in their "Bean Books." Then, the children plant onions in the lab’s hydroponic garden and harvest the greens for a scallion, cheese, and cracker tasting.

Electricity & Magnetism

The second term of Grade 2 science serves as the introduction to the physical sciences in which the children study electricity and magnetism. Second grade scientists begin the term analyzing electricity
whereby they build individual circuits, then combine them in small groups and later as a whole class. When examining circuits, students are informally introduced to the Engineering Design Process.

Students perform various investigations pertaining to magnetism, which culminate in the hosting of a "Magnet Carnival" for their peers. Additionally, the children work in teams to research and create "Magnet Fact Books" on the iPad. During class discussions, students are prepared to demonstrate the knowledge that they have acquired through detailed lines of questioning.

**Grade 3**

In Grade 3, students continue to work in the Lower School Science Lab two sessions per seven day cycle. Grade 3 scientists are well versed in scientific investigations within a lab setting and can design their own experiments with materials provided. As a result of previous years’ discourse, the children are accustomed to sharing their ideas with their classmates. More importantly, they are comfortable with discrepancies of data and points of view. Any resulting disagreements that may potentially arise, are most often resolved in such a way that multiple perspectives are empowered and either rectified or combined. Throughout the course of the year, the Engineering Design Process is formally introduced and practiced.

**Structural Engineering (Bridge Building)**

During the first term, Grade Three science students complete a study of bridges and structural engineering. Students analyze each of the bridges for its tension, compression, balance, and symmetry by subjecting these bridges to stress tests. Incorporating the Third Grade Social Studies theme of Movement & Migration, students work in partnerships to build complex bridge types modeled after famous bridges from around the world.

**Sustainable Design (Egg Drop Physics)**

Throughout the second term, third grade scientists continue their study of structural engineering by preparing for the Biodegradable Egg Drop. Students study children's toy packaging and are motivated to design and construct packages using only biodegradable materials in order to protect an egg from a fifty-foot fall. Probability, collective norms for collaboration, Newton’s Laws, and principles of environmental conservation are examined within the context of the project.

**Microscopy**

Later, third grade scientists learn how to use a microscope and record their magnified observations in a Microscope Journal. Continuing the year’s theme of environmental conservation and echoing the Third Grade Social Studies theme of Migration, students analyze and compare tissue samples from common loons (a migratory bird species) that were adversely impacted by the environment and from those who suffered an accidental death.

**Grade 4**

In Grade 4, students come to work in the Lower School Science Lab for one single and one double period per seven day cycle. Grade 4 Science serves as the students’ introduction to scientific fieldwork and research. In concert with the Fourth Grade’s study of New York City history, students analyze the Hudson River Estuary system and its multiple stakeholders. Two trips are taken to Dead Horse Bay. In the Fall, each homeroom spends a day performing fieldwork at the site. In the Spring, Lower School Science Club (Optional - See Below) returns to the site to tag and release Horseshoe Crabs.
**Scientific Fieldwork**

During the first term, fourth grade science students dutifully prepare for their trip to Dead Horse Bay. The children begin their study of an estuarine ecosystem by replicating its abiotic components in the lab’s 125-gallon aquarium. The concepts of salinity and pH are introduced through hands-on investigations. While at Dead Horse Bay, students perform water quality tests (and later submit the data to the National Parks Service), seine for fish (and invariably collect over 60 fishes of multiple species), collect and research "Neo-archeological" artifacts from the site’s percolating landfill, and perform a Beach Clean Up whereupon they remove (on average) over 90 pounds of plastic trash from the beach.

**Marine Science**

Building upon their study of marine chemistry, the curriculum segues into marine biology. As part of their study of marine invertebrates, the children learn to dissect both a cuttlefish and a squid. The students research cuttlefish anatomy and behavior and create "nature documentaries" on their iPads using the app, Puppet Pals HD, later presenting them to the class. Continuing their study of marine invertebrates, students work in teams of three to dissect squid and prepare lab reports on the iPad using the app Keynote. Later in the term, the course shifts its focus to marine vertebrates, specifically fish. Fourth grade scientists conduct an external analysis of eleven different species. As they investigate the connection between the form and function of fish anatomy, students are able to determine how a fish behaves within its habitat based upon its external features. Additionally, threats and stressors facing the global fish stock and conservation issues within the marine food web as a whole are addressed.

**Aviation (The Physics of Flight)**

Emanating from Fourth Grade Science’s examination of the history of Dead Horse Bay, is a study of aviation, since the site was home to New York City’s first municipal air field. Students engage with the physics of flight, analyzing the properties of air, lift, thrust, and drag, Bernoulli’s Principle and Newton’s 2nd Law within the context of an engineering design challenge in which students build and test airplane prototypes.

**Lower School Science Club**

Lower School Science Club is a relaxed and often child-directed enrichment program for students in Grade 4 that runs from mid-February through the end of May and meets Thursday mornings before school from 7:45am-8:15am, (at which time students are dismissed directly to their homerooms). Attendance is voluntary and varies from week to week. Past projects have included: fossils, polymers, setting up and maintaining a household aquarium, designing simple circuits with Little Bits, presenting at Earth Day Chapel, a trip (outside of the school day) to tag and release Horseshoe Crabs, and various dissections (sheep brain), among other projects.
Spanish

The Lower School Spanish program is based on the FLES (Foreign Language Early Start) model in which classes are conducted in Spanish. FLES is considered best practice by researchers and is supported by ACTFL (the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages). It is designed to provide a sequential language learning experience that is content based with the main goal of achieving communicative proficiency and cultural appreciation. Developing new language skills in the context of authentic situations, where the target language (Spanish) is used, is a crucial component of this model. The Spanish curriculum is integrated, meaning that it aligns with the grade level curriculum, allowing for meaningful connections to be made between the two. With this approach, language becomes a vehicle for learning content, which is a meaningful and effective way to develop new language skills in a familiar context. Early childhood is a fantastic time during which to develop new language skills, as students are less self-conscious about trying to make new sounds, and are able to learn new vocabulary and expressions effortlessly. Instilling in students a love of world languages and appreciation of other cultures from an early age are important goals of the program.

Additionally, each academic year, students focus on learning about a particular Spanish-speaking country.

Kindergarten

In Kindergarten, Spanish curriculum mirrors and extends the classroom social studies focus of Basic Needs. Additionally, Mexico is in the spotlight. Students learn about the unique symbols, food, music, and celebrations that represent this vibrant country. Through morning meetings, students are exposed to numbers 0-70, the calendar, and the weather. Through repeated exposure, they acquire vocabulary and communicative structures to engage in basic conversations, as well as to follow classroom instructions. Singing, dancing, movement games and use of puppets and books are a fundamental part of language learning, and students learn many songs and games throughout the year.

Grade 1

In first grade, students focus on a study of identity, through personal preferences and physical characteristics as well as self-expression through emotions, likes, and dislikes. Furthermore, students study about their family, school community and neighborhood. Each year in Spanish, students learn about a particular Spanish-speaking country. In first grade, with Spain as the focus, students explore the various symbols, food, music, notable individuals and celebrations that represent this vibrant country. Through morning meetings, students continue to practice numbers 0-100, the calendar, and the weather. Through repeated exposure, they acquire vocabulary and communicative structures to engage in basic conversations, ask questions, and follow classroom instructions. Singing, dancing, and movement games are a fundamental part of language learning, and students learn many songs and games throughout the year.

Grade 2

In second grade, with Central America and Guatemala as the areas of focus, students explore the various symbols, food, music, traditions and geography that represent this vibrant region. Through repeated
exposure, students acquire vocabulary and communicative structures to engage in basic conversations, ask questions, and follow classroom instructions. Singing, dancing, skits, and movement games are a fundamental part of language learning, and students learn many songs and games throughout the year.

**Grade 3**

In third grade, with The Caribbean as the areas of focus, students explore the various symbols, food, music, traditions and geography that represent this vibrant region. Through repeated exposure, students acquire vocabulary and communicative structures to engage in basic conversations, ask questions, and follow classroom instructions. Singing, dancing, movement games, skits and books are a fundamental part of language learning, and students learn many songs and games throughout the year.

**Grade 4**

In fourth grade, with South America as the areas of focus, students explore the various symbols, food, music, traditions and geography that represent this vibrant region. Through repeated exposure, students acquire vocabulary and communicative structures to engage in basic conversations, ask questions, and follow classroom instructions. Singing, dancing, movement games, skits and books are a fundamental part of language learning, and students learn many songs and games throughout the year.
Technology

Lower School classrooms are equipped with computers, iPads, interactive & programmable hardware and a variety of educational apps. These are chosen to support and extend work in the curriculum and to deepen the students’ understanding of effective uses of technology to further their learning in a variety of curricular areas.

Kindergarten

The youngest students work in the technology lab and the classroom in small groups. Students are introduced to a variety of educational software exploring literacy, mathematics, pattern recognition and logical thinking. Additionally, students begin exploring robotics with Bee Bots.

Grade 1

Students continue exploring literacy, pattern recognition and logical thinking using educational software. The grade is introduced to a mathematics program that can be accessed at home to improve recall. Classes continue to explore robotics with programmable Dash robots.

Grade 2

In the second grade, our programming lessons become more challenging with Dash robots. Digital Citizenship is introduced to promote responsible technology use. Additionally, classes work on activities that involve geometry, problem solving, skill building, creativity and multimedia content. As the year progresses, students transition from 2D to 3D geometric environments. We end the year with a Minecraft project that requires students to work collaboratively in a three dimensional environment to build a class city.

Grade 3

Third grade students continue to build on technological knowledge through discussion, projects, and engagement in the lab. New software is introduced to support classroom curriculum. Digital Citizenship lessons are expanded and Media Literacy is introduced. Students use Minecraft in a culminating research project. Classes also explore game design and learn to give productive feedback. Students are expected to use programming with robotics to solve problems and engineer solutions.

Grade 4

Students in the fourth grade prepare for Middle School by learning how to navigate and use Google Apps. Students continue exploring topics to prepare them for the social challenges ahead, including Digital Citizenship and Media Literacy, through discussions and class projects. Systems thinking, game design, robotics and engineering projects challenge classes with more complex problems to solve. Our final project of the year combines research with Minecraft in an exciting culminating project.
Art

Each year, students in Grades K through 4 participate in an alternating cycle of studio art, sculpture, and ceramics. Guided by faculty members – often in a workshop setting – students create objects and images suffused with imagination and framed by careful observation. The program is designed to capitalize on young students’ innate love of materials and art making by exposing them to a variety of media. Supportive classroom environments nurture problem solving and encourage a willingness to take risks. Increasingly complex projects requiring more sophisticated skills satisfy students’ evolving sense of competence as they mature. Through investigations of personal narratives and the study of art from diverse times and cultures, students have their own stories validated, hear the varied voices of their classmates and begin to imagine the world from new points of view. Together, these classes give students opportunities to express themselves in their own unique voices and aim to inspire a life-long love of the arts.

Kindergarten

Kindergarten art is as much about building skills as it is about creative expression. Students are introduced to the fundamentals of art and basic color theory. The students meet once a cycle. Each class has ten students that meet for a semester and rotate between two different stations. Students experiment with paint, pencils, charcoal, pastels, watercolors, collage, fabric and other media. Each station is designed to engage students with a new artistic skill and has a special emphasis on color, line, shape and texture. Students are introduced to different techniques, encouraging them to use their imagination and to embrace the dynamic process of making.

Grade 1

First graders are introduced to the fundamentals of art with a special emphasis on line and shape. Basic color theory is introduced, as students identify the primary and secondary colors. Following color, a unit on texture is introduced, and students learn to identify and create different types of texture on a two-dimensional surface. Grade 1 art is as much about building skills as it is about creative expression. Students are encouraged to use their imaginations and embrace the dynamic and fluid process of making. Recent projects have included “Mixed-Up Animals,” and “Trees Inspired by Piet Mondrian.”

Grade 2

Grade 2 students continue to build on many of the concepts they were introduced to in Grade 1. Line, shape and color continue to be of primary importance. Students explore these concepts, utilizing the knowledge and skills they gained in Grade 1, while also deepening their engagement through challenging painting and collage projects that center around a theme of self-portrait. Skills learned include learn how to draw in proportion, exploring tertiary colors, and working through a multi-step project. Recent projects have included “Mixed Media Portrait inspired by the artist Hanoch Piven and “Painting self-portraits.”

Grades 3

In third Grade, students build on the concepts covered in Grades 1 and 2 such as line, shape, color and texture. Additionally, they learn about composition value, tints, and shades. Students also deepen their knowledge of color by studying Color Theory according to Wassily Kandinsky. New tools such as graphite sticks, chalk and watercolor are introduced as well as materials like felt, found objects and wire. Recent projects have included “Still-life Drawings”, and "Unconventional Drawing".
Grades 4

In Grade 4 art class, students build on the concepts covered in Grades 1, 2 and 3 such as line, shape, color and texture. Additionally, they learn about value, tints, shades and observational drawing. New tools such as charcoal and ink and new techniques such as papercut, figure drawing and Silhouette portraiture are introduced. Recent projects have included “Still-life Drawings”, "Unconventional Drawing".
Ceramics

The Lower School ceramics program encourages children to explore clay as a medium and to master basic skills in the crafting of both utilitarian and artistic pieces. Since clay is a three-dimensional medium, it is a wonderful tool for exploring form, shape, balance, texture, and many other aspects of art. The children are encouraged to begin with a concept and to then execute their ideas within the framework of specific assignments. The freedom to come up with individual responses to assignments is one of the basic principles of the ceramics program at Trinity. Many of our projects have been designed to complement grade-level social studies, language arts, and science curricula.

Grade 2

Students in Grade 2 ceramics classes will continue to explore basic hand-building methods for working in clay. They will be introduced to the technique of coiling and will make coil-built bowls and vases. These will be incised with designs inspired by looking at Native American pottery from the southwestern United States. Other projects will include making small animal figures using both coils and pinching, and creating closed forms using two pinch pots put together. An emphasis will be placed on the concepts of form, balance and surface texture as students work on these projects.

Grades 4

Students in Grade 4 ceramics classes will meet for a semester and continue to develop skills for working in clay, utilizing the hand-building methods of pinching, coiling and slab-building. Students will be introduced to the ceramics made by the artist Pablo Picasso, and will design pieces inspired by his work. Projects may include slab molded plates and vessels such as large coil built containers, vases and pitchers.

Emphasis will be placed on the process of designing a piece and seeing it through to its completed form.
Sculpture

The sculpture curriculum is designed for the pleasure and personal growth of Lower School students. It encourages students to develop not only hand skills, but also planning and communication skills. Young children love working with wood and with tools. Sculpture classes encourage children to express their own design ideas and to accept responsibility for those decisions. The tools and techniques offered expand and build each child’s confidence, and the projects are carefully chosen to allow room for various skill levels.

**Grade 1**

A major project in first grade is the Circus Train - each student draws an animal, clown or other figure that could ride on a circus train. The designs are transferred to wood, cut and finished. They also assemble the train car to which the figures are mounted. All the cars are painted and joined together to form the train. The children learn how to transfer a two-dimensional image on paper to a three-dimensional material. Each child completes an individual project, which is displayed with the work of the other children to complete the total train.

**Grade 3**

Third grade students work on building marionettes - children are given the opportunity to conceive a marionette puppet and build it. With the freedom to design the figures as animal, human or as another object, the basic components are cut and shaped from wood and additional materials available in the studio. The marionettes are presented as a beginning sculpture project that can introduce the student to the body and its basic engineering. The technical skill expectations are flexible so as to encourage creative and imaginative qualities in the project. Once the marionettes are completed, the children are also encouraged to write plays using their characters they have just completed.
Music

The Lower School music program reflects our belief that the arts are an intrinsic component of academics. The curriculum followed in each grade is a blend of the three most popular approaches used in music education today: Orff Schulwerk, Dalcroze Eurhythmics, and Kodály. Elements are adopted from each philosophy to create an eclectic and creative approach to musical teaching and learning that includes singing, creative movement, instrument playing, and listening activities.

Vocal repertoire, instrumental works, movement activities, listening sessions, and note-reading lessons are tailored to complement the various learning needs and styles of each age group. As children progress through the Lower School, their pitch-matching skills, rhythmic coordination, and understanding of musical concepts are continually developed and refined. Many performance opportunities, linked to our chapel program, provide dynamic ways for students to contribute to the life of the school and to take pride in their growing musicianship.

Kindergarten

The Kindergarten music curriculum invites children to respond to music through songs, rhymes, games, instruments, and dances. An extensive music library provides materials drawn from many different cultures. All activities help the children experience the elements of music - rhythm, melody, tempo, dynamics, texture and form. As musical awareness grows, the students develop a sense of pride in making ensemble experiences successful.

Grade 1

The Grade 1 program focuses on developing the children’s pitch-matching and rhythm skills, as well as learning to read simple music notation. Rhythms are practiced on the non-pitched instruments that were used in Kindergarten. The students also begin to learn to play pitched Orff instruments and sing solfege. This combination of instrumental technique and ear training stresses the two basic music concepts studied throughout the year: rhythm and melody.

In class, group and partner dances, games and body percussion exercises help develop coordination and social skills. The children have frequent opportunities to perform throughout the year.

Grade 2

Grade 2 students continue to develop skills in singing, music reading, moving to a steady beat, and music listening. Class activities include learning multicultural songs, reading and writing music notation, performing line and circle folk dances, and exploring timbre, melody, and rhythm through playing a variety of rhythmic and pitched instruments.

Music plays an especially vital role in the Grade 2 study of the Native Americans. This interdisciplinary study culminates with the much-anticipated Native American Festival that is performed for an audience of parents, faculty, and students from other grade levels.

Children who study privately have the opportunity to share their accomplishments during their classes. Those with proficiency in string instruments may join the Lower School Orchestra.
**Grade 3**

The musical concepts established in earlier years continue to be cultivated in the Grade 3. The students experience and deepen their understanding of such elements as rhythm, melody, harmony, form, and timbre through a more focused and comprehensive exploration of the Orff instrumentarium – bass, alto, and soprano xylophones, metallophones, and glockenspiels.

Concerts and performance opportunities continue to play a significant role in enhancing the students’ solo and ensemble performance and listening skills.

**Grade 4**

The Grade 4 classroom music curriculum builds and expands on all previous learning. Students embark on their yearlong study of the soprano recorder and play it in ensemble with the Orff instruments. Two- and three-part singing, creative movement, instrumental study and performance, along with listening activities provide students with a multi-faceted array of musical experiences.

The Grade 4 instrumental program gives each student the opportunity to study one of the following instruments: Violin, Viola, Cello, Trumpet, Trombone, Saxophone, or Clarinet. Students receive small group instruction on like instruments once a cycle and also meet as a full band or orchestra once a cycle. The highlights of the class are the winter and spring concerts.

In addition, Grade 4 students also have the opportunity to join Trinity Tones, Trinity’s Grade 4 chorus. Weekly rehearsals and performances throughout the year at chapels and at the winter and spring Grade 4 concerts allow the students to enhance their ensemble music-making experience and showcase their talents in an exciting and enjoyable way.
Library

Trinity School has one of the largest elementary school libraries in the city. The environment of the library is warm and inviting, and it is laid out with the needs of young children in mind. The Grades K-2 library shelves are filled with collections of picture books, easy-to-read books, short novels and easy non-fiction. Fiction and non-fiction books for Grades 3-6 are also plentiful. There are also reference, biography, and a professional collection for faculty and parents. Computer databases provide additional reference information for research projects. The library houses a large collection of DVDs, videos, and books on tape.

Every K-2 class comes to the library during a scheduled library period. Grade 3 and 4 classes schedule visits to the library based on projects or curricular plans. In K-2, the librarians spend the first portion of each period engaging the children in some form of whole-class reading activity. These activities may include reading stories of general or particular interest (depending on the time of year, the needs of individual classes, etc.), or book talks and presentations of new acquisitions. In the older grades, librarians teach the students various research skills based on topics integrated with the classroom curricula. Sometimes the librarians spend time simply talking with the children about reading activities in which they are currently involved. Many teachers remain with their classes during library periods. The teacher and the librarians guide the children in selecting books to take home. Selections are guided primarily to encourage the children to develop a love of reading, but they also serve to support and enhance the classroom language arts, social studies, math, and science programs. The librarians are always eager to help teachers find books to enrich classroom theme-units or genre studies.

The library program includes celebrations of themes presented at various times throughout the academic year. These may take the form of book and art displays, library assemblies, or visits from authors, storytellers and performers from around the world. Each year in late May the library hosts a "Paperback Book Fair for Summer Reading". The librarians also prepare suggested reading lists for each grade level.
Physical Education & Fitness

The Lower School Physical Education & Fitness program is designed to keep students active and involved in physical activity. We aim to foster enjoyment in activity, enhance socialization skills, and to build a conceptual knowledge of movement, fitness and sport skills. All Lower School children participate in Physical Education & Fitness classes in small groups.

In Kindergarten and Grade 1, the students rotate through each Physical Education teacher, whereas, in Grades 2-4 the students stay with the same teacher for the entire year. In swimming K-4, the students remain with the same teacher for the year.
Support Services

Learning and Math Specialists

The Lower School has three full-time learning specialists who work on a language–based curriculum with all grades from Kindergarten through Grade 4. Learning specialists work with children in a variety of group settings for specific instruction in reading and language arts. They also work closely with the classroom teachers on curriculum planning, and collaborate in classroom instruction for a variety of subject areas, such as social studies and writing.

There are also two math specialists who work together to ensure that the math curriculum in the Lower School is rigorous and aligned with the Common Core standards. One of the two math specialists serves as a K-4 Math Coordinator, who works directly with the Grades 5-12 Math Department Chair as well as Assistant Head of School for Academic Affairs to assure curriculum coherence from K-12. The math specialists also attend math department meetings, conversations that are essential for making sure that our Lower School students gain solid grounding in the math concepts necessary for the more complex math work in Middle School and beyond. The math specialists work with all students, both in full classes and in small groups to enrich and support the math curriculum. They assist the teachers in providing support for children with learning differences in mathematics as well as providing specialized instruction for children seeking advanced challenges.

All of the learning and math specialists work closely with faculty, school psychologists, and administrators to ensure that students work to their highest capabilities and become independent learners. As a team, they determine which students will receive specialized instruction based on the academic history of the student, teacher observations, and results of both formal and informal testing.

Learning and math specialists meet with the classroom teachers on a regular basis as well as in conferences with families, tutors, and therapists concerning individual children. They also meet weekly with Lower School administrators, school psychologists, and the school nurse to discuss the students’ progress, relate pertinent communications about the students, and make recommendations for outside evaluations or tutoring.

Psychologist

Consultation

The Lower School psychologist provides consultation services to the classroom teachers, learning specialists, teachers of special subjects, administration, and the Grade 5 team. This consultation takes place in regularly scheduled meetings including weekly meetings with individual classroom teachers, weekly special services team meetings, meetings with the teachers of special subjects several times per year, and bi-weekly Grade 5 team meetings in the Middle School.

Consultation consists of providing advice and sharing information in order to optimize individual students’ learning and/or emotional well-being. In addition, consultation includes conducting classroom observations of students, developing individual or classroom behavior plans, supporting implementation of accommodations for students with learning differences, advising teachers on how to present sensitive
information to families, applying developmental theory to the classroom, and educating teachers about a range of topics related to psychology and education.

**Crisis Intervention**
The Lower School psychologist is on call to intervene in urgent situations which involve students and their families. These urgent situations occur rarely. More often, the psychologist is called in to provide support in situations where students are coping with temporary adjustment problems related to issues such as separation anxiety, peer conflict, or family stressors.

**Social-Emotional Curriculum Development and Teaching**
The Lower School psychologist develops curriculum and teaches lessons in Grades K through 4 related to social-emotional concepts and skill acquisition. In Kindergarten, the lessons emphasize self-control and include topics such as learning from mistakes, personal space, managing frustration, and tattling vs. telling. In Grade 1, the lessons are focused on understanding friendship and how to make and keep friends. In Grade 2, mindfulness lessons related to kindness and compassion are taught along with lessons about teasing and bullying. Grade 3 has a mindfulness curriculum which includes lessons which introduce tools for focusing attention, enhancing memory, managing stress and coping with difficult emotions. Grade 4 lessons introduce student awareness of learning differences, communication styles, and the roles that group members take on. Additional lessons are taught on an as needed basis if a class or grade level is experiencing challenges in a particular social-emotional realm.

**Family Guidance**
The Lower School psychologist meets with families by appointment to provide guidance to families related to school issues as well as other issues at home. At times, teachers will recommend that families meet with the psychologist to discuss specific challenges that a child is facing in school.

The Lower School psychologist also participates in several family events designed to educate adults at home about relevant topics related to child development. These have included coffees and evening meetings covering topics such as internet safety, talking to children about sex and puberty, supporting children’s friendships, and the importance of positive discipline.

**Time-Limited Student Interventions**
At times, the Lower School Psychologist will meet directly with a student for a limited period of time. The rationale for direct intervention may include an assessment to determine the need for outside psychological support, to provide support for a child who may be experiencing home-related stress due to divorce, family illness, or loss of a family member, and to provide check-ins for students who are working on school related behavioral goals.

**Liaison to Outside Psychological Support Services**
The Lower School psychologist provides referrals for outside psychological services including psychotherapy, family guidance, psycho-educational and neuro-psychological evaluations, and psychiatric consultations. The psychologist will maintain contact with outside psychological or psychiatric supports in order to share information and coordinate follow up interventions.
Psycho-educational and Neuro-psychological Evaluations
Along with making the referrals to outside evaluators, the psychologist shares pertinent information, facilitates contact between evaluators and classroom teachers, and schedules the feedback evaluation meeting with the families, evaluator and Trinity staff. In addition, the psychologist is responsible for obtaining the written psycho-educational or neuro-psychological report and distributing copies to the Trinity team. Finally, after the evaluation feedback meeting, the Lower School psychologist coordinates the follow-up plan including any accommodations that are prescribed by the report.
We hope that you have enjoyed reading this guide, and that you have learned something not only about what we do, but also about the spirit in which we do it. We are proud of our school, our program, and our students!