

HIGH ABILITY: A LOOK AT OUR PROGRAM

(ALTERNATE TITLE—PAPERS, PAPERS, PAPERS! 😊)

WHAT WE WILL DISCUSS

- Step by step outline of the identification process
- Information about Sunnyside's high ability teachers and classes
- Final thoughts on high ability students and their challenges



STEP ONE: COLLECTING INFORMATION FROM THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (AROUND APRIL)

- Parent referral
- Student self-referral
- Teacher recommendation forms (recommend to strongly recommend)
- Grade reports (A's-B's)
- ISTEP reports (Pass+)
- OLSAT score (intelligence test)
 - SAI above 115 for Challenge
 - SAI above 125 for Excel
- NWEA (ability test) —this information comes later
 - Above 88%ile= Challenge
 - Above 95%ile=Excel

STEP TWO: INCOMING 5TH GRADE MEETING (LATE APRIL/EARLY MAY)

-Hosted at Sunnyside

-Any parent/guardian with a child who qualified for screening will receive an invitation to attend (based on OLSAT scores and parent/teacher recommendations)

-5th grade teachers outline classroom expectations

-Question/Answer opportunity

-NOT a guaranteed of placement in any G/T class

STEP THREE: COMMITTEE MEETING (LATE MAY/EARLY JUNE)

-Prepare spreadsheets for all committee members

-Committee Members: counselors, administrators, teachers, staff from Hiatt

-Review each student to determine placement.



STEP FOUR: ADDITIONAL TESTING

-If the committee needs more information to determine the placement of a student, there are a couple of additional tests that we use...

-KBIT2 (intelligence test)

-SAGES (ability test)

Both are fairly easy to administer and take about 30-60 minutes.

-TOMAGS (Test of Mathematical Ability for Gifted Students)

Contact parents for permission to test and to schedule a testing time.

(Try to get as many of these done before school starts as possible)



ADDITIONAL TESTING CONT'D

Diagnostic Tests

-Especially useful in math

-Determines if the student has the skills to skip ahead in instruction

Example:

Challenge math in 5th grade teaches 6th grade standards.

Excel math in 5th grade teaches 7th grade standards.

STEP FIVE: ANNOUNCING PLACEMENT TO PARENTS (JUNE)

-*Committee Decision Notification

Indicates which classes their child has qualified for

-*Challenge/Excel Program Offer

Brief explanation of general expectations



STEP SIX: MOVE-IN STUDENTS OR PARENT APPEALS REQUESTS (ON-GOING)

-Review available information

-Perform additional testing if necessary



STEP SEVEN: HIGH ABILITY INTERVENTION

-Teacher initiates (usually @ first report card of 70% or below)

1. Meet with student

2. Notify parent (either in person or by phone)

-Formal case conference if grade does not improve

-Counselor and administrator attend with parent and teacher(s)

-Determine what interventions we can try that may help student to be more successful

-Plan for follow up meetings to determine reasonable course



FOR STUDENTS ENTERING OR LEAVING

If parents/teachers have concerns that a student is not placed correctly, we encourage them to contact Mrs. Nolan as soon as possible so that we can address the matter.



CHALLENGE

5th grade

STEM-Math (one grade level above)/Science (on grade level)-Lisa Hobbs

HUMANITIES-LA (on grade level)/SS (on grade level)-Nadine Roush

6th grade

STEM-Math (one grade level above)/Science (on grade level)-Brent Martin

HUMANITIES-LA (on grade level)/SS (on grade level)-Christina Stanfield

Although many of these classes are on grade level, the students work at a faster pace and are held to higher academic expectations.



5TH CHALLENGE HUMANITIES

In 5th Grade Challenge Humanities, your child will:

Participate in a curriculum which fully integrates language and social studies. Many of the books we read, pieces we write, and projects we complete will be tied to a theme from social studies. Topics we will investigate include United States geography, early people in North America, exploration and colonization, the American Revolution, and U.S. government and the constitution. History, geography, and economics are integrated into everything we do!

Read an assortment of novels and nonfiction texts, participate in literature circles, and keep Reader Response journals.

Be expected to maintain an average quiz score on Ac. Reading of 90% or above, and meet a personalized point goal each term.

Participate in several electronic field trips related to American history.

Learn about economics by taking on a role in our classroom mini-economy.

Increase vocabulary by studying specific words lists as well as the Latin and Greek word parts that serve as the basis for much of the American English language.

Complete lessons in grammar designed to promote an understanding of the structure of language and how it works.



5TH CHALLENGE STEM

Math:

Students will be covering the 6th grade standards in math class. We will be covering fractions, decimals, ratios, proportions, functions, percents, probability, geometry, angles, polygons, perimeter, area, volume, integers, statistics, transformations, properties and algebraic equations.

What can be expected:

- * Daily lessons and homework
- * Accelerated math - students work independently to meet a predetermined goal each nine weeks. This allows students to practice the standards and to advance as they master the skills.
- * Classroom stations to work on skills independently in order to meet the needs of all individuals in the classroom.
- * Homework most week nights which takes 15 - 30 minutes.

The exception to this would be if your child failed to complete assignments in class...those assignments would become homework too.

**It would be very helpful to the students if they know their multiplication facts prior to coming to school in August. This makes learning new concepts much easier when students aren't struggling to remember their facts.



5TH CHALLENGE STEM CONT'D

Science:

Students will be involved in a variety of lessons and activities covering topics in life science, physical science and earth science.

Students will be involved in a project covering the scientific method. We will also be working on some SLED (Scientific Learning through Engineering Design) projects in which the students will design prototypes and test them out.

What can be expected:

*Occasional homework if an assignment is not completed in class.



6TH CHALLENGE HUMANITIES

Social Studies Emphasis

Curriculum in 6th Grade Challenge Social Studies will focus on World Geography. Students will complete an assigned small-group project each grading period. These projects will directly correspond to the thematic unit for each grading period. In addition, students will engage in concept-based instruction focused around quarterly themes integrated with a yearly theme.

Language Arts Emphasis

Curriculum in 6th Grade Challenge Language Arts will center around the following areas: Quarterly Novel Studies with an emphasis on literary elements, weekly skill-building instruction to refine grammar, improve general conventions skills, and target literacy skills in the areas of shared inquiry, and interpretive and evaluative oral and written response.

Students will engage in an assortment of on-going Process Writing assignments through the participation in our Writing Stations. Students will be exposed to the 6-Trait of Writing approach as the main instruction for the writing process. During the third 9-week grading period, efforts will be concentrated on the expository (research) paper covering The Middle Ages, which will overlap with our Middle Ages thematic unit in Social Studies.



6TH CHALLENGE STEM

Homework will be given several times per week. You be required to keep a journal in which you will include daily activities, homework and labs. All quizzes, tests and graded homework should be kept in a binder or pocket folder for a particular grading period. Science and Math work is to be written in pencil and blue or black ink on the iPad. Your performance in class will be assessed in a variety of ways:

- Work may be collected for a completion grade.
- Work may be collected and graded for accuracy.
- Work may be collected for a combination of completion and accuracy.
- Work may be discussed in class, not collected but a participation grade will be awarded.

EXCEL

Both 5th and 6th grade

STEM-Math (two grade levels above)/Science (one grade level above)-Jeff Cote

HUMANITIES-LA (one level above)/SS (on grade level “with extensions”)-Jennifer Fultz

5TH EXCEL HUMANITIES

Social Studies

5th Grade Curriculum with Enrichment: American History (Early Native Americans through Westward Expansion)

Project Examples: Native American Research Project, Common House Structure Building, American Revolution Formal Debate, Encampment Building Project/Letter Writing Simulation, Landform Models

Language Arts

5th, 6th, and 7th grade Standards/Curriculum

Students are expected to read at least 2 years above grade level

Students will read novels both independently and in class

Nine Week Book Report Projects – approx. 20% of final grade

Novels: *Matilda* by Roahl Dahl (social/emotional curriculum), *The Diary of Remember Patience Whipple* by Kathryn Lasky, *Wonder* by R.J. Palacio, *Tangerine* by Edward Bloor, *My Brother Sam is Dead* by James Lincoln Collier and Christopher Collier, and *Orphan Train Rider* by Andrea Warren

Heavy focus on daily creative writing and structured writing projects

Vocabulary: Wordly Wise (Homework)

6TH EXCEL HUMANITIES

Social Studies

6th Grade Curriculum with Enrichment: World History (Ancient Civilizations including Greek/Roman, Aztec/Inca/Maya, Middle Ages, etc.)

Full research paper using APA format

Project Examples: Building a Trojan Horse, Caste System Simulation, Virtual Archeology Dig, 12 Labors of Hercules Performance, Paper Mache Globes, Country Relief Maps

Language Arts

6th, 7th, and 8th grade Standards/Curriculum

Students are expected to read at least 2 years above grade level

Students will read novels both independently and in class

Nine Week Book Report Projects – approx. 20% of final grade

Novels: *Out of my Mind* by Sharon Draper, *Crispin* by Avi, *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry, *Anne of Green Gables* by L.M. Montgomery, *A Christmas Carol* (Unabridged) by Charles Dickens, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry, *The Hero Schliemann* by Laura Amy Schlitz

Heavy focus on daily creative writing and structured writing projects

Vocabulary: Wordly Wise (Homework)

5TH EXCEL STEM

5th Grade Excel Math:

Material addresses 7th grade standards

High School/College Preparatory Skills Developed (Note taking, deadlines, test preparation)

Mixture of Direct & Collaborative Activity Learning

Homework 2-3 days per week

5th Grade Excel Science:

Material addresses 6th grade Science Standards

Project Based Learning (Planet Projects, Cell Projects)

STEM laboratories to reinforce science material (Roller Coaster Lab, Jell-O States of Matter, etc.)

Mixture of Direct & Collaborative Learning

Annual Participation in the SEFI Regional Science Fair



6TH EXCEL STEM

6th Grade Excel Math:

Material addresses 8th grade Pre-Algebra standards

High School/College Preparatory Skills Developed (Note taking, deadlines, test preparation)

Mixture of Direct & Collaborative Activity Learning (No Bake Cookie Conversions)

Homework 2-3 days per week

6th Grade Excel Science:

Material addresses 7th grade Science Standards

Project Based Learning (Rock Collections)

STEM laboratories to reinforce science material (Wolf Park Lab, Balloon/Rubber Band Racers, etc.)

Mixture of Direct & Collaborative Learning

Annual Participation in the SEFI Regional Science Fair



SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL ISSUES COMMON AMONG G/T STUDENTS

-Over-excitability

- Focus on a particular topic

- Greater sensitivity to environment (ex. loud noises, bright lights)

- Surplus of physical energy

- Vivid imagination/creativity

- Heightened emotional sensitivity

-Asynchronous development

Physical, cognitive, and emotional development may be at different places all within the same child. The child may find it difficult to communicate with age-equivalent peers who are below the child's intellectual level; even if they are at the same level emotionally.



SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL ISSUES CONT'D

-Self-esteem/Identity Issues

Feeling different from one's same age peers

Cultural/linguistic/SES differences among gifted students

-Perfectionism

Place unrealistically high standards for themselves

Place unrealistically high standards for others

-Anxiety

Pressure to perform in g/t classes

Can manifest as school-avoidance

Students don't always recognize or can't articulate what it is (just a bad or scared feeling)

Keep an eye out for these and contact your child's counselor if you are concerned



IN CLOSING...

“I am neither especially clever nor especially gifted. I am only very, very curious.”

-Albert Einstein

“I asked mom if I was a gifted child...she said they certainly wouldn't have paid for me.”

-Calvin (Calvin and Hobbes)

