



ST. JOHNSBURY ACADEMY JEJU

KINDERGARTEN CURRICULUM HANDBOOK

2025 - 2026

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Kindergarten Curriculum Handbook
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KINDERGARTEN CURRICULUM HANDBOOK

LANGUAGE ARTS

The goal of the Language Arts curriculum is to develop confident and independent readers, writers, speakers, and listeners with the aim of better understanding the world around them.

In Kindergarten, instruction focuses on building foundational skills. Students engage daily with a variety of print materials, helping them develop letter recognition, sounds, and early word knowledge through a comprehensive program of reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

ORAL LANGUAGE

The students will use effective oral and aural communication skills in a variety of settings, both individually and in groups. Students will have the opportunity to develop their oral speaking skills through formal and informal conversations, sharing, and presentations.

Key Skills & Concepts:

- Develop confidence in speaking and listening.
- Practice turn-taking, active listening, and responding appropriately.
- Use complete sentences to express ideas clearly.
- Participate in both structured and spontaneous conversations.

PHONICS

Phonics is taught through a structured, systematic approach that builds foundational reading skills throughout the year. Instruction begins with letter-sound correspondences and moves into blending and segmenting simple words. As the year progresses, students are introduced to more complex phonics patterns, including digraphs, beginning and ending blends. Lessons are explicit and cumulative, with each new skill building on previously taught content. Students practice these skills through direct instruction, targeted activities, and decodable texts aligned with their current level.

Key Skills & Concepts:

- Mastery of letter-sound correspondences and phonemic awareness.
- Blending and segmenting sounds to read and write simple words.
- Application of phonics skills in reading decodable texts.
- Cumulative skill-building to support fluent and accurate reading.

GRAMMAR

In Kindergarten, students explore how language works by noticing patterns in mentor texts and experimenting with their own writing in developmentally appropriate ways. The focus is not on grammar rules in isolation, but on helping young writers make meaning, express ideas, and begin building sentences with intention.

Key Skills & Concepts:

- Understanding that writing communicates meaning.
- Recognizing capital letters at the beginning of sentences and names.
- Identifying ending punctuation (periods, question marks, exclamation points).
- Naming and using nouns (people, places, things).
- Exploring verbs through action and storytelling.
- Beginning to build complete sentences.
- Using descriptive words (adjectives) to add detail.
- Learning about word spaces, letter formation, and directionality.
- Noticing and imitating sentence patterns from books and shared writing.

READING

Students are immersed in a print-rich environment where they develop letter-sound knowledge and basic phonetic principles through direct instruction, small group activities, and book exploration. They practice decoding, comprehension, and interpretation of both fiction and non-fiction texts, responding individually and in groups.

Reading includes whole group, small group, and individualized instruction focused on text features and comprehension strategies. Students learn to make connections, ask questions, and construct meaning from texts. To support their growth, they spend time reading “just right” books, including decodable texts that match their developmental level and build confidence as emerging readers.

Key Skills & Concepts:

- Build decoding skills through phonics and exposure to decodable texts.
- Develop comprehension strategies.
- Explore text features in both fiction and non-fiction.
- Engage in group discussions to share understanding and ideas.
- Practice reading independently and building reading stamina.

WRITING

As students develop readiness, they begin connecting letters to sounds and understanding the relationship between print and meaning. Through various activities, they follow the writing process and learn to express ideas clearly for different purposes and audiences.

In writing workshop, students explore narrative, informational, and opinion writing. They are supported as they move from drawing as a form of expression to writing complete sentences. Along the way, they are explicitly taught key writing conventions such as using finger spaces, capital letters, and punctuation, helping them communicate their ideas with clarity and confidence.



Key Skills & Concepts:

- Move from drawing and labeling to sentences and structured writing.
- Learn to form letters correctly and consistently.
- Use writing to share clear and readable ideas.
- Practice using writing conventions like spacing, capitalization, and punctuation.
- Develop ideas through the writing process with teacher support.

MATHEMATICS

In Kindergarten, children build essential number sense and begin to use math to solve problems, explain thinking, and make sense of the world. Hands-on learning, games, manipulatives, and real-life contexts help deepen their understanding.

Key Skills & Concepts

- Counting & Number Sense**
 - Count to 100 by 1s and 10s.
 - Read and write numbers to 20 (and beyond).
 - Understand one-to-one correspondence when counting objects.
 - Compare numbers using “greater than,” “less than,” or “equal to”.
 - Understand that the last number said tells “how many”.
- Addition & Subtraction**
 - Model addition and subtraction within 10 using fingers, drawings, and objects.
 - Solve simple story problems.
 - Understand part-part-whole relationships.
 - Begin writing number sentences (e.g., $5 + 2 = 7$).
- Place Value**
 - Understand the concept of “ten” and “ones”.
 - Group and count objects by tens and ones.
 - Compose and decompose numbers up to 19 (e.g., 12 is $10 + 2$).
- Measurement & Comparison**
 - Compare length, height, weight, and capacity using everyday language (shorter, heavier, holds more).
 - Sort and order objects by size.
 - Measure using nonstandard units (e.g., blocks, paper clips).
- Geometry**
 - Identify and describe 2D and 3D shapes (circle, square, triangle, rectangle, hexagon, cube, cone, cylinder, sphere).
 - Compare shapes based on attributes (e.g., sides, corners).
 - Build and draw shapes.
 - Compose simple shapes to form larger shapes.

- Sorting, Classifying & Patterns**
 - Sort objects by attributes (color, shape, size).
 - Identify, extend, and create repeating patterns (AB, AAB, ABB, ABC).
- Data & Graphing**
 - Organize data into categories (e.g., favorite colors).
 - Interpret simple picture graphs and bar graphs.
- Math Talk & Problem Solving**
 - Explain thinking using math words.
 - Work with peers to solve problems.
 - Try different strategies and tools.

SCIENCE

Kindergarten students at SJA Jeju now take a deeper dive into science exploration, inquiry, and communication. They begin to conduct structured investigations, record findings, and explain their thinking using accurate vocabulary and logical reasoning. Through engaging units on weather, plants, animals, and materials, students explore real-world phenomena and develop early scientific habits of mind. The Kindergarten program lays the groundwork for future science learning by fostering curiosity, confidence, and a sense of discovery.

Key Skills & Concepts:

- Observe closely and record findings through drawings and simple charts.
- Ask investigable questions and test their predictions.
- Engage in structured hands-on science investigations.
- Use science vocabulary to describe properties, patterns, and processes.
- Collaborate with peers to share and revise scientific ideas.

Unit 1 - Weather: In this first unit, students observe and describe daily weather conditions using appropriate vocabulary and simple tools. They track and compare weather over time, noticing seasonal patterns and changes. Through hands-on exploration and local connections to Jeju’s climate, students learn how weather affects people and the environment. They are also introduced to extreme weather events such as blizzards, typhoons, floods, and tornadoes.

Unit 2 - Animal and plant needs: Students identify the basic requirements for animal survival, such as food, water, air, and shelter. They investigate and compare the life cycles and needs of various living things while developing foundational science skills like questioning, predicting, and observing. Students also explore how plants and animals are connected to and depend on their natural environments.

Unit 3 - Forces and motion: Students explore how pushes and pulls affect how objects move. They investigate how tools like ramps and different surfaces influence speed and direction, while observing cause-and-effect relationships through hands-on experiments. Students make predictions, test their ideas, and record their findings using drawings, labels, and simple charts.



SOCIAL STUDIES

The goal of the Social Studies Curriculum is to develop curious inquirers who think critically and will be able to anticipate and cope with continuous change. Social Studies best practices provide opportunities for students to collaborate effectively and use decision-making strategies that allow them to access and analyze vast information sources. Emphasis is placed on activities that involve inquiry and problem solving about significant human issues and lead to respectful, tolerant, global citizenship.

The foundation for Social Studies in kindergarten begins with children's personal experiences and their initial understanding of themselves in relation to their families. Gradually students expand their understanding to include how their communities work together. Kindergarten teachers facilitate children's social studies skills development by encouraging them to interact with others in positive and respectful ways, modeling and role-playing various social situations.

Unit 1 - Myself, My Friends, and My Feelings

Explore personal identity, emotions, and relationships to build self-awareness and connection.

Learn how to be a good friend through sharing, empathy, and cooperation.

Practice resolving conflicts respectfully and communicating feelings effectively.

Make decisions that consider the needs and perspectives of others.

Unit 2 - Wants and Needs

Distinguish between wants and needs through real-life scenarios and discussions.

Understand basic economic concepts such as goods, services, and limited resources.

Make thoughtful choices by considering different perspectives and consequences.

Develop empathy and responsible decision-making skills that support individuals and the community.

Unit 3 - Landforms, Bodies of Water, and Maps

Identify and compare landforms and bodies of water using maps and globes.

Understand how maps represent real places and recognize features like continents and oceans.

Use basic map elements to create personal maps that reflect geographic understanding.

Develop spatial awareness and problem-solving skills through hands-on projects such as dioramas.

ART

Kindergarten students learn about the Elements of Art through exploration, experimentation, and play. Students identify the 7 elements of art in various artworks, describe the elements that they see, and create art with each of the 7 elements throughout the year. Even within the framework of the Elements of Art, student work is self-directed, and students are encouraged to use a variety of materials, techniques, and processes while creating. During Kindergarten, students are introduced to new processes such as watercolor, paper sculpture, and color mixing.

Key Skills and Concepts:

Use a variety of tools and media independently.

Work with classmates to create collaborative artworks.

Demonstrate safe and proper use of materials and tools.

Explain various art-making processes while creating.

Interpret art by identifying the subject matter and describing relevant details.

MUSIC

Students participate in integration of performing, creating and expressing music. They will respond, connect, perform, and reflect on elements of music such as melody, rhythm, form, texture, and harmony. Singing, chanting, playing games, dancing, movement, dramatization, and playing instruments allows for a 'hands-on' approach, based on the idea that children learn best by doing. Students play an active role in making the music and are involved in the process of creative expression. All students have opportunities to perform what they are learning.

Key Skills & Concepts:

Foundational Elements: Identifying and demonstrating steady beat, simple rhythms, and melodic direction.

Expressive Movement: Interpreting music through varied movement and improvisation with their corresponding dynamics such as "piano" and "forte".

Solfège: Singing and signing "sol" and "mi," then "la."

Ensemble Play: Collaborating in simple small groups on classroom instruments.



PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Kindergarteners build strength, balance, and control through movement challenges, dance routines, and physical games. They begin to engage in activities with rules, reflect on physical changes in their bodies, and understand how to participate safely in both structured and free play.

Main Units Covered: Recess Activities · Swimming · Scooters · Obstacle Course · Creative Movement/Dance · Throwing and Catching · Fitness Circuit · Minor Games · Field Day

Key Skills & Concepts:

- Refine fundamental movements: skipping, leaping, sliding, galloping.
- Participate in swimming basics: safe entry, kicking, floating.
- Develop manipulative skills: underhand throwing, catching with two hands.
- Understand and follow game rules and class expectations.
- Recognize how physical activity affects their bodies.

KOREAN HISTORY, LANGUAGE & CULTURE

The aim of Korean Language, History and Culture is to provide Korean students an opportunity to learn in their mother-tongue language. It is important for our students to develop critical thinking skills, verbal skills, reading and writing skills and listening skills in their own language. The host country’s language is valued at SJA Jeju. We understand the importance of developing a strong foundation of their mother-tongue language in order to further develop their skills in another language such as English. We also value the country’s history and culture as well as to aid in the utilization of Korea’s diverse resources and enhance the educational experiences of our students. It is our firm belief that experiencing and appreciating our own culture facilitates a heightened awareness and respect for other cultures. The Korean History and Culture program is of primary importance, and an effective tool, in attaining these goals.

Korean Language (Key Skills & Concepts)

- Listen and speak in Korean through songs and stories.
- Recognize and write basic Hangul characters.
- Build foundational vocabulary.

Social Studies (Key Skills & Concepts)

- Explore Korean customs and holidays.
- Learn about family and local traditions.
- Begin understanding Korean identity.

EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION

For Kindergarten, the experiential education program consolidates outdoor comfort and safety through weekly Outdoor and Experiential Learning Labs, integrating social studies and science. Curriculum-aligned field trips provide essential real-world contexts, helping students become more adept at guided exploration and develop a growing sense of responsibility towards nature, fostering curiosity and a proactive approach to outdoor engagement.

Key Skills & Concepts:

- Group Dynamics:** Proficiently using the buddy system, staying together, and proactively communicating concerns if a buddy is unhappy or separated.
- Safety & Well-being:** Independently selecting and applying appropriate clothing for various climates; actively reporting injuries to adults and understanding simple first aid concepts; demonstrating awareness of common safe/unsafe plants and animals.
- Environmental Management:** Consistent practice of Leave No Trace Ethics, such as respecting wildlife and packing out all trash.
- Health & Outdoors:** Consistently engaging in 40 minutes weekly of vigorous outdoor activity, including imaginative play and exploration.

TECHNOLOGY & MAKERSPACE

DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

Young people are growing up in an evolving digital world and they are faced with many dilemmas such as online safety, cyberbullying, privacy, misinformation, and digital distractions. At St. Johnsbury Academy Jeju, we use technology in meaningful ways and teach students skills to safely navigate the digital world.

Overview: To lay the groundwork to help students understand

- Healthy media habits.
- The value of real-world connections.
- Basic online safety awareness.

Key Skills & Concepts:

- Finding a healthy balance with technology.
- Being present with others.
- Staying safe online.

ROBOTICS

This introductory unit focuses on building foundational computational thinking skills through a combination of unplugged activities and the introduction of the VEX 123 robot (without iPads). Students will engage in unplugged activities to understand basic programming concepts and sequencing. They will also explore the VEX 123 robot’s pre-programmed functionalities and coders to understand how robots follow instructions in a tangible way.



Key Skills & Concepts:

- Understand the basic concept of a robot and its function.
- Develop sequential thinking and the ability to follow instructions.
- Learn the fundamental concept of an algorithm as a set of steps.
- Be introduced to basic coding concepts.
- Practice problem-solving by planning and testing sequences to achieve a goal.
- Develop communication and collaboration skills through sharing activities and discussing how to control the robot.
- Enhance their creativity through storytelling with coded instructions and demonstrating simple robot behaviors.
- Make a tangible connection between instructions and the actions of a robot.

LIBRARY

In KG Library classes, students build foundational skills in using and understanding the library while developing a love of reading. As they progress, they learn to select books based on their interests, use library organization systems, and demonstrate responsible library behavior. Library lessons are literacy-based and often support topics taught in the classroom. In the upper grades, students also begin to develop digital information literacy skills through integrated classroom content.

Key Skills & Concepts:

- Model book care.
- Identify parts of a book.
- Make connections (text-to-text, text-to-self, text-to-world) when reading/listening to a book.
- Organize story sequence .
- Make predictions while reading/listening to a book.
- Begin to understand the difference between fiction and nonfiction books.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

In the Elementary School, counselors provide both group and individualized support to promote students' social and emotional development. Our services are delivered through both direct and indirect student support.

Social and emotional learning is developed through interaction with others. Students begin to recognize and name their own feelings as well as empathize with others. They begin to develop conflict resolution skills needed to regulate their emotions, behavior, and attention. Skills for entering into social groups, developing friendships, learning to help, and other prosocial behavior are an important part of the program.

Our comprehensive school counseling program believes that all students can learn, respecting their unique developmental needs, strengths, and areas of improvement. Our school counselors will advocate for all students, and provide emotional and social support through preventive, individualized, and group interventions. As an international school, school counselors at St. Johnsbury Academy Jeju adopt the American School Counselor Association's Ethical Standards, which guide all our practices. Our goal is for students to demonstrate their Hilltopper profile attributes when they graduate and serve as valuable members of their community.

You can read more about [SJA Jeju School Counseling Program at this link](#).

