



ST. JOHNSBURY ACADEMY JEJU

PRE-KINDERGARTEN 4 (PK4) CURRICULUM HANDBOOK

2025 - 2026

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PRE-KINDERGARTEN 4 (PK4) CURRICULUM HANDBOOK

LANGUAGE ARTS

Our Language Arts curriculum is designed to build confident, independent readers, writers, speakers, and listeners who can positively impact the world. Using a structured literacy approach, we teach reading and writing skills explicitly and systematically, focusing on phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Instruction is tailored to meet each child's needs and is reinforced through daily classroom activities and experiences, helping students build a strong and lasting foundation in language and literacy.

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 role-play, conversations, re-telling stories and solving conflicts with their peers.

Key Skills & Concepts:

Use oral language to communicate effectively in both individual and group settings.

Develop speaking and listening skills through role-play, conversations, and story re-telling.

Practice conflict resolution and respectful peer communication.

READING

The students will be immersed in a print-rich environment. They will be exposed to word and letter sound correspondence and integrating basic phonetic principles. These concepts and skills are taught through direct instruction, individual and small-group activities, and exploration of books and other print material. When reading and listening to both fiction and nonfiction texts, students will have opportunities for both group and individual response.

Key Skills & Concepts:

Build early reading skills through exposure to letter-sound correspondence and basic phonics.

Engage in direct instruction and small-group activities in a print-rich environment.

Respond to fiction and nonfiction texts both individually and in group discussions.

WRITING

The students explore the letters and sounds of the alphabet through a variety of activities. At the student's readiness, they will begin to identify connections between letters and sounds as well as print and meaning. As their knowledge of letter-sound correspondence and sight vocabulary increases, they will begin to transfer these thoughts and ideas to paper.

Key Skills & Concepts:

Explore letters and sounds to build understanding of print and meaning.

Begin to write by connecting spoken language to written words using phonics and sight vocabulary.

Develop early writing fluency through a variety of activities that support self-expression.

MATHEMATICS

PK4 learners are beginning to use math to describe, compare, and solve simple problems. Concepts are introduced through exploratory purposeful engagement.

Key Skills & Concepts

Counting & Number Sense

Count aloud to 20+ and recognize numbers 0–20+.

Understand one-to-one correspondence when counting objects.

Compare numbers (more, fewer).

Begin writing numerals.

Operations & Early Problem Solving

Explore combining and taking away using concrete objects.

Use everyday situations to solve simple math problems (e.g., "If you have 3 crackers and eat 1, how many are left?").

Geometry

Identify and describe 2D shapes (circle, square, triangle, rectangle).

Begin exploring 3D shapes (cube, sphere, cone).

Build with and compare shapes using math vocabulary (sides, corners).

Patterns & Sequencing

Identify, copy, and create patterns using movement, colors, sounds, or objects.

Understand and describe sequences (first, next, last).

Measurement & Data

Compare and order objects by length, height, and weight.

Use simple graphs (e.g., class favorite fruit) to collect and interpret data.

Spatial Thinking

Use and understand positional words (beside, behind, over, under).

Describe where objects are in space during play and transitions.



UNITS OF STUDY (SCIENCE & SOCIAL STUDIES)

Our PK4 students develop inquiry-based literacy through focused exploration and discussion of the world around them. They investigate natural materials and living things through experiments, stories, and inquiry. Children begin to make connections, use more descriptive language, and represent their ideas with increasing detail. Inquiry in PK4 builds a strong foundation for thinking, predicting, and communicating like young scientists.

Unit 1 - What Makes Me Special: This unit is designed to launch the school year by fostering a sense of identity, belonging, and confidence in young learners. This unit helps children explore and express who they are—physically, emotionally, culturally, and socially—while also recognizing the uniqueness of others. Through literature, hands-on activities, songs, discussions, and self-reflective projects, students build foundational skills in language, self-awareness, social-emotional learning, and fine motor development. The unit establishes a warm, inclusive classroom community where every child feels valued.

Key Skills & Concepts:

- Self-Identity & Expression:** Children explore their names, families, physical characteristics, likes/dislikes, and what makes them unique through self-portraits, "All About Me" books, and sharing circles.
- Building Classroom Community:** Establish classroom norms and routines while celebrating diversity and practicing kindness and respect toward others.
- Language & Literacy Development:** Use read-alouds (e.g., I Like Myself! or All Are Welcome) to prompt discussion, vocabulary growth, and comprehension related to self-concept.
- Social-Emotional Learning:** Develop self-awareness and empathy through activities that encourage children to recognize feelings and build friendships.
- Fine Motor & Creative Expression:** Engage in art and hands-on projects that promote coordination, creativity, and pride in personal work.

Unit 2 - Change & Transformation: This unit aims to help students explore growth and change of themselves and the world around them. We want them to observe, experience and create change.

Key Skills & Concepts:

- Explore the changes within themselves as they grow and develop, exploring of our physical appearance.
- Explore how they can transform their physical appearance through dress-up and imaginative play. These experiences will help children to explore how social roles change in a variety of contexts.
- Understand transitions as they grow and develop and move on to new classes and new experiences.
- Develop a natural curiosity of the world in which they live and the changes they see and experience in the physical world will also be explored: observing weather and seasons in the local community.
- Use their senses to explore how materials can change: mixing colors/ingredients, cooking and melting.

Unit 3 - We Work Together: Children explore their expanding world by moving beyond self-awareness to understanding their community and the diverse spaces people and animals inhabit. This unit fosters curiosity, critical thinking, and collaboration as children learn about neighborhoods, homes, people and helpers, and signs and symbols that make communities thrive. This unit provides a rich foundation for understanding the interconnectedness of people, animals, and spaces, helping children develop a sense of belonging and responsibility within their communities.

Key Skills & Concepts:

- Discover where they live by identifying features of their own homes .
- Explore where people and animals live, recognizing the similarities and differences in how living beings create and adapt their homes.
- Learn how people and animals make homes, emphasizing resourcefulness and creativity in shelter-building.
- Investigate places around town, such as libraries, parks, and grocery stores, to understand how these spaces support daily life.
- Meet community helpers, gaining an appreciation for the vital roles individuals play in keeping communities safe, healthy, and connected.
- Understand signs and symbols that help people navigate communities safely.

Unit 4 - Our Living World: In this unit, students will explore the amazing world of living things! Throughout the unit, students will engage in activities such as planting seeds, observing tadpoles/ stag beetles, and exploring the sky. By the end of the unit, students will develop an appreciation for the living world around them and understand how living things grow, change, and depend on each other and their environment.

Key Skills & Concepts:

- Life Cycles** – Students will discover how plants and animals grow and change over time. They will observe the life cycle of a frog, a plant, and other living things to understand how living things begin, grow, and change.
- Plants & Animals** – Students will explore different types of plants and animals, learning how they look, move, and grow. They will compare living things and discuss what makes them special.
- What Living Things Need** – Students will learn that all living things need food, water, air, and a safe place to live to survive. They will explore how people, animals, and plants meet their needs in different ways.
- Day and Night Cycle** – Students will observe how the world changes from day to night, learning about the sun, moon, and stars. They will explore how animals and people have different routines during the day and at night.
- Planets and Our Earth** – Students will be introduced to the planets in our solar system and learn about Earth as a special place where people, animals, and plants live.



ART

PK4 students participate in various creative discoveries and explorations. Students engage with a variety of new materials, experiment with new processes, and develop new skills during art class. They participate in self-directed creative making, practice using tools properly and safely, and create art based on concepts such as Self, Change, and Process. During PK4, students are introduced to new processes such as lacing, spin art, and beading.

Key Skills and Concepts:

- Use crayons, paints, clay, scissors and glue independently.
- Develop skills with fibers, dyes, and spinners, working towards independence.
- Share materials with classmates .
- Describe the subject of their own art, and the art of others.
- Select preferred artworks for display.

MUSIC

Students participate in an 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:

- Rhythm & Movement:** Embodying different rhythmic patterns through movement.
- Vocal Play:** Expanding singing range and exploring vocal expression.
- Percussion Introduction:** Discovering diverse sounds from non-pitched instruments.
- Music as Story:** Using music to convey simple narratives and emotions.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

PK4 continues to develop fundamental motor skills while adding complexity through creative movement and structured play. Students grow more confident in navigating space, participating in cooperative games, and experimenting with body control using different equipment and pathways.

Main Units Covered: Recess Activities · Scooters · Creative Movement · Obstacle Course · Minor Games · Field Day

Key Skills & Concepts:

- Improve control of locomotor skills: hopping, galloping, skipping.
- Develop balance and coordination in obstacle courses.
- Follow multi-step instructions during group activities.
- Engage in rhythmic movement and expressive dance.
- Practice taking turns and showing respect to classmates.

EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION

The PK4 experiential education program continues to utilize weekly Outdoor and Experiential Learning Labs to deepen students' connection with nature and integrate social studies and science concepts. Curriculum-aligned field trips further enrich these experiences, allowing students to gain more confidence and independence in outdoor settings, focusing on applying early safety practices and beginning to understand their role in caring for the environment.

Key Skills & Concepts:

- Exploration:** Engaging in slightly longer guided walks; actively looking for specific natural elements (e.g., a specific leaf shape).
- Outdoor Living:** Carrying and managing personal snacks and water; consistently carrying out their own trash.
- Safety & Well-being:** Making choices about appropriate clothing for different weather; consistently reporting injuries to adults; beginning to identify safe/unsafe plants or animals with adult guidance.
- Environmental Awareness:** Investigating natural elements like under bark and stones (and returning them gently); exploring basic features like puddles or small garden beds.



TECHNOLOGY & MAKERSPACE

In PK4, technology and makerspace is integrated into units of inquiry. Guided by the ISTE Standards for Students, St. Johnsbury Academy Jeju Elementary School’s technology program emphasizes: the development of responsible digital citizens, the cultivation of computational thinking through coding and robotics, and effective cross-curricular integration of technology. Leveraging a 1:1 iPad program, this framework empowers students to become innovative designers, knowledge constructors, creative communicators, digital citizens, computational thinkers, and global communicators.

The aim of the Elementary School Makerspace program is to:

- Provide hands-on, creative opportunities for students to design, experiment, and invent while engaging in science, engineering, and tinkering.
- Develop an understanding of and a positive attitude toward design thinking methodology which encourages the solving of complex problems through ideation and iteration.

LIBRARY

In PK4 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.

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](#).

