

Fifth Grade

In Waldorf Education, Fifth grade is viewed as a year of balance and harmony. The students are poised between two worlds in their development, both physically and emotionally. Fifth grade is often referred to as the golden age of childhood. It is a time when the child's body is in close to perfect proportion, before the exaggerated and occasionally awkward growth of the early teen years begins. Their movements gain much greater fluidity and balance. It is a time when the imaginative and carefree state that is childhood begins to blend with the increasing sense of independence, critical thinking, and self-awareness of adolescence.

In Fifth grade, students use their new capacity for critical thinking as they study Botany, the geography of North America, and ancient Western civilizations including India, Egypt, Mesopotamia, Persia and Greece. They learn about the cultural development of these civilizations through their myths, religious beliefs and social achievements. The students also become familiar with the geography of these areas, as they draw their own maps, and learn about the major land forms and climates.

In Fifth grade mathematics, the students become proficient at manipulating fractions and mixed numbers utilizing all four processes, and decimals are introduced. An emphasis is placed on solving story problems which require multiple steps and processes. Statistics is used as a tool to sort, display and interpret information. Students explore geometry and are able to identify geometric solids using correct terminology, gain a basic understanding of angles and degrees, understand and calculate perimeter and understand the concept of area. They also learn to draw complex and intersecting geometrical forms by hand. They learn about the metric system.

Fifth grade students write compositions that are descriptive, analytical or reflective, through poetry, stories, reports, business and friendly letters, and summaries of their main lesson studies.

In their Fifth grade year, students are able to choose between the violin, viola and cello. They continue to play the soprano recorder and learn how to read musical notation. Fifth grade students sing in parts and harmonies.

In Fifth grade, students paint, draw and model as part of their artistic education. They revisit knitting in handwork, as they knit their first pair of socks.

Students in Fifth grade participate in the Greek Games, where they join other Fifth grade Waldorf students from the surrounding area for two days, to compete in javelin, discus, relays, wrestling and long jump. In addition to learning these skills, students in Fifth grade begin to play team sports.

The subjects presented by the class teacher are supplemented by specialty classes in Spanish, handwork, woodwork, orchestra and eurythmy.