

# 2017-2018 The Priory Lower School Language Arts Curriculum Guide

## Language Arts



Our girls enjoy a developmentally appropriate, thoughtful language arts curriculum that focuses on all aspects of communication. The knowledge and skills they acquire build from grade to grade. Reading, writing, speaking, and listening well provides them with the means to explore new interests and make sense of our wonderful world. Using these skills in all of our academic subjects gives meaning and purpose to what students learn in language arts. They have ample opportunities to express themselves creatively, accurately, and effectively. Moreover, they think

deeply about what they read, ask questions, and learn to “read between the lines.” Finally, they begin to use technology as a tool to access and analyze information as well as a means to express themselves. As our girls enter middle school, they have developed solid foundations in reading, writing, listening, and speaking to engage with texts at a more complex level and to communicate in more nuanced ways.

### Foundational Skills:

- Print concepts (developing an understanding of written language and how it works)
- Phonological awareness (recognizing that words are made up of a variety of smaller sounds)
- Phonics (understanding how sounds and letters are connected)
- Word recognition (recognizing written words correctly and easily)
- Fluency (developing the ability to read aloud accurately, with speed, and appropriate phrasing) to support understanding of what they read

### Reading:

- Learn to read closely for comprehension (moving from general recall to critical analysis)
- Determine the central ideas and themes of what they are reading
- Explore the characteristics and structure of fiction and non-fiction texts for deeper understanding
- Compare and contrast themes, topics, and characters and determine relationships among individuals, events, and ideas
- Develop an awareness of multiple perspectives
- Summarize text by identifying evidence that support points made by the author



# 2017-2018 The Priory Lower School Language Arts Curriculum Guide

- Draw information from multiple sources
- Synthesize information from multiple sources and draw their own conclusions

## Grammar, Spelling, and Language Usage:

- Develop proper grammar usage in writing and speaking
- Learn appropriate use of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling
- Build increasingly sophisticated vocabulary as they move up in grade level
- Recognize that individual words have different meanings in different contexts
- Learn to use context to infer meaning of a word or phrase
- Interpret and use figurative language such as similes and metaphors
- Learn to consult reference materials such as dictionaries and thesauruses to find out the meaning of unclear or unknown words



## Writing:

- Practice age-appropriate writing, from drawing and dictating to producing a variety of texts (informational, explanatory, opinion pieces, narratives etc.)
- Learn how to plan, revise, edit, and rewrite text
- Develop the ability to use appropriate types of writing depending on the audience and purpose
- Learn to write logically and clearly, using appropriate descriptive details in a clear sequence, and using precise language
- Practice conducting short research projects where they gather, summarize, and paraphrase information from a variety of sources
- Create lists of resources that enhance their writing
- Use digital tools to produce and publish writing individually and in collaboration with peers
- Recognize that different methods of communication are appropriate and effective for different contexts
- Develop and convey their own positions on issues

## Speaking and Listening:

- Learn how to prepare for and participate in discussions and oral presentations
- Speak appropriately depending on the context of the conversation
- Speak logically and refer to facts to express and defend statements or ideas clearly
- Listen carefully to others and conduct a conversation while taking into consideration others' opinions
- Apply speaking and listening skills to support group projects.