

Social Studies and Science Curriculum Map (Place-based Units)

Place-based projects at the Cottonwood School are grounded in the history, environment, and people of Portland and the Pacific Northwest. Each trimester concentrates on key concepts anchored in social studies and / or science. Reading, writing, public speaking, art, and geography skills are heavily embedded into the project work. Through an integrated approach, students go deep into a topic over an extended period of time. This allows them to learn the complexities of an issue while discovering how components naturally connect with other concepts. We apply the lenses of social justice and eco-justice to all units.

As students grow, so do to places they study. In kindergarten through second grade, students focus on family, home, school, and neighborhood. This also includes looking at local rivers, forests, and mountains. In third grade students reach further back in time to learn about the ancient history of Oregon, and in fourth and fifth grades, students learn about United States history as well as the biomes of the Pacific Northwest. Sixth through eighth grades introduce students to national and global topics while also striking a balance with local connections. For example, as students learn about globalization in the seventh and eighth grades, they visit local businesses who sell products internationally to see how global trade impacts Portland. Coordinating scope inline with a child's evolving understanding of the world allows us to create a developmentally appropriate approach to learning about place.

Our literacy and math programs support our overall place-based curriculum by giving students the skills they need to complete high-quality, authentic project work. All of our curriculum correlates with state and national standards and student learning is assessed in multiple ways in addition to standardized testing.

	Science	Social Studies
K	1) Animals in winter 2) Pond ecology and life cycles	Me, my family, other families, our community
1st/2nd grade	Year One 1) Forests Year Two 1) Plants and Gardening 2) Mountains 3) Rivers and Salmon	Year One 1) Neighborhoods and Community 2) Restaurant Management
3rd grade	1) Geology/Geologic history 2) Archeology	1) What is Culture? 2) The Chinookan People
4th/5th grade	Year One: 1) Watersheds and water cycle Include states of matter 2) Weather and Biomes -seasons Native animals and native plants 3) Oceans -Earth, sun, moon MINI: Electricity and Magnetism unit	Year Two: American History This curriculum is currently under development and will be informed by the work we are doing with funding from the Gray Family Foundation to incorporate Indigenous perspective. Topics include: local tribal histories, cultural exchange, impact of immigrant migration to the PNW, Celilo Falls, Indigenous influence on U.S. government.
6th grade	1) Human Body Unit 2) Chemistry	2) The Civil Rights Movement and Portland's Black History
7th/8th grades	Year one: 1) Ecology: Animal and Ecosystem interconnectedness	Year one: 1) Bill of rights, first amendment 2) Citizenship

	<p>2) Astronomy: Gravity, Eclipses, Seasons</p> <p>3) Forces: Newton's laws, simple machines</p> <p>Year two:</p> <p>1) Weather and Climate</p> <p>2) Humans and Resources, climate change</p> <p>3) Magnetism, electricity, energy sources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - History of "us and them" in the U.S. and Portland - Immigration <p>3) Project Citizen</p> <p>Year two:</p> <p>1) Elections, diplomacy, leadership (levels of Gov't)</p> <p>2) Trade/Global Economy, World Geography</p> <p>3) Project Citizen</p>
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