

## Fourth Grade / Level 4

**Language Arts, Reading, Writing, Creativity, Geography and Culture**  
*(Recommended for ages 9 - 12, depending on child's reading level. Please refer to our first - third grade scope and sequences to see what was covered in prior years. You can always mix and match more than one level of our language arts curriculum to accommodate your child's reading level. However, please keep in mind that some literature selections in this level may not be ideal for younger students.)*

- Continue exploring character, setting, plot, and point of view through a variety of engaging literature selections and hands-on activities
  - Identifying the stages of a standard plot
  - Exploring the stages and elements of The Hero's Journey / monomyth through a variety of stories and films
  - Reading and exploring mythology from several different cultures; identifying unique features of each as well as universal similarities
  - Exploring the theme of finding and trusting our inner voice
  - Using historical fiction to peek into the past, and as a springboard for learning more about a specific time in history
  - Reading and writing poetry
  - Writing letters, lists, incomplete and complete sentences, paragraphs, and short stories
  - Reading independently from chapter books
  - Exploring literature weekly through a variety of creative activities and journaling prompts
  - Experimenting with different forms of storytelling and finding the writer's voice
  - Exploring geography and culture through food and cooking. Topics covered include: learning to read and follow a recipe, using maps and globes, learning how to navigate various references to learn more about each country, exploring the connection between food and culture
  - Reviewing prefixes and suffixes from year 3, learning new suffixes, and reviewing spelling rules regarding prefixes and suffixes
  - The sounds of "-ey," "gn-," "gu-," "-augh," "-eigh," "-our" and "-oe"
  - The sounds of "-ti-," "-ci-," "-ssion," and "-sion"
  - The many sounds of "-ough"
  - Learning spelling rules
  - Reviewing plural nouns and irregular plural nouns
  - Reviewing verb endings and irregular verbs
  - Decoding unfamiliar words through context
  - Exploring and using new vocabulary words
  - Grammar and Punctuation
- \*The Super Secret Notebook Guide takes the place of the Creative Extensions Guide for Level 4. The student will use this project to explore and play with words, sentences, poetry, paragraphs, imagery, symbolism, storytelling, and more!*

## **Science (appropriate for ages 5 - 12)**

### **• Introduction to physics**

- Introduction to the scientific method
- Learning to observe with our senses
- Learning to observe and measure qualities (weight, temperature, etc.) with equipment
- Learning to record and interpret data from observations
- Learning to make a hypothesis, based on observations and data collected
- Learning to test a hypothesis, and record and interpret data collected during testing
- Learning to make a conclusion, based on data collected in testing, and assess whether or not the hypothesis was correct
- Learning how scientists repeat this cycle again and again
- Basic introduction to matter, energy, force, and motion
- Exploring waves and sound
- Exploring heat and pressure
- Exploring light, color, and images
- Exploring electricity and magnetism
- Exploring flight and floating
- How humans capture, store, and use energy

### **• Introduction to engineering**

- Introduction to the engineering design process
- Simple machines: inclined planes / wedges, levers, wheel and axle, gears, pulleys and screws
- Structures: roads and dams, arches and bridges, domes and tunnels, and towers
- Rube Goldberg machines

### **• Introduction to human anatomy**

- Cells, tissues, organs, and systems
- The senses
- Skin, hair, and nails
- Eyes, nose, mouth, and throat
- The systems of the body: skeletal, muscular, cardiovascular, respiratory, urinary, immune, digestive, lymphatic, nervous, endocrine, reproductive
- DNA and basic introduction to the concept of genetics
- Health and wellness
- Optional weekly profiles to learn about different scientists and inventors and their contributions

## **Nature Study (appropriate for ages 5 - 12)**

- 12 prompts for each of the four seasons; can be started in any season
- Growing your own food, using a variety of methods (activities designed to accommodate a variety of growing spaces, from a sunny window to a small patio to a spacious yard)
- Understanding and exploring the ecosystem of a garden
- Choosing plants for nutrition, flavor, and health
- Choosing plants for supporting beneficial birds, pollinators, and garden predators
- Choosing plants for fun and exploration
- Using what you already have on hand as much as possible
- Collecting and saving seeds
- Starting seeds and planting bulbs
- Cold season and warm season crops
- Vermiculture
- Composting

- The science of soil
- Organizing and planning a garden and a garden timeline
- Annuals, perennials, and biennials
- Garden friends and foes
- Companion planting
- Pollinators and garden predators
- Container gardening
- Managing water, heat, light, and nutrients
- Mulch, supports, and trellises
- Introduction to the concept of permaculture

## History

- Beginning in first grade, we do not include a history curriculum with our elementary year packages.
- US history curriculum for the elementary and middle grades is currently in development. *A River of Voices* Vol. 1 was released in January 2020. Vol. 2 is anticipated for release in spring 2021. Vol. 3 (the final one) is anticipated for release in spring 2022.
- For world history, Curiosity Chronicles is an excellent secular option to consider.

## Nine Profiles in Art, Vol. 1 (Elementary Arts Curriculum, appropriate for ages 5 - 12)

- Exploring art and artists through weekly art prompts, using a variety of materials
- Mindful attention when looking at works of art
- Discussing observations of works of art
- Exploring the lives, times, and works of nine different artists
- Exploring a variety of art forms and techniques
- Featured artists: Louise Bourgeois, Leonardo da Vinci, Dorothea Lange, Georgia O’Keeffe, Gordon Parks, Zaha Hadid, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Maya Lin, José Guadalupe Posada

## Book List for Level 4

*Please note: the lists on the following pages contain only the **required or highly recommended** books for our level 4 curriculum. We include extensive lists of further recommended books in the curriculum, which a parent may choose to use or omit at their own discretion, according to their preferences.*

## Independent Reading

- We also recommend daily independent reading from level-appropriate books for at least 30 minutes on most days. We *highly recommend* letting them choose their own independent reading books from the library or used book stores (encourage a variety of picture books, chapter books, fiction and non-fiction, and graphic novels.)

# Blossom & Root Year 4 Language Arts Literature List

Mythology | The Hero's Journey | Finding Your Voice

## Required Selections

- *Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH* by Robert C. O'Brien
- *A Child's Introduction to Greek Mythology* by Heather Alexander
- *Echo Mountain* by Lauren Wolk
- *Ramayana: Divine Loophole* by Sanjay Patel
- *Finding Langston* by Lesa Cline-Ransome
- *Poetry for Young People: Langston Hughes* Edited by David Roessel and Arnold Rampersad
- *Tristan Strong Punches a Hole in the Sky* by Kwame Mbalia
- *They Call Me Güero: A Border Kid's Poems* by David Bowles
- *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle
- *D'Aulaire's Book of Norse Myths* by Ingri d'Aulaire, Edgar Parin d'Aulaire
- *A Wish in the Dark* by Christina Soontornvat

## Optional Additional Selections

These books are optional, and are accounted for in the curriculum guide if you choose to add them, with recommended chapters or selections to read each week:

- Optional additional selection to read during Greek mythology unit : *The Lightning Thief* (Percy Jackson and the Olympians, Book 1) by Rick Riordan
- Optional additional selection to read during Norse mythology unit: *Odd and the Frost Giants* by Neil Gaiman
- Optional additional poetry selections (weeks 1 - 15): *Poetry for Kids: Emily Dickinson* edited by Susan Snively
- Optional additional poetry selections (weeks 24 - 36): *Hip-Hop Speaks to Children: A Celebration of Poetry with a Beat* by Nikki Giovanni



# Book List: Spines

## Required Books:

There are no required books for this curriculum. Theoretically, you could complete this curriculum without using any books at all, simply by using our "big picture" messages listed in each unit and our suggested video links. However, we do have several books that are highly recommended (see below) to help truly bring each topic to life in a visual way for your child. Further in this guide, you will find many pages of optional supplemental books to consider as well.

## Highly Recommended Books:

Wonder #	Book
Most 1 - 18	<p><i>DK Smithsonian Explanatorium of Science</i> ISBN 978-1-4654-8244-0</p> <p>This is one option for the main spine for the physics portion of Wonders 1 - 18, and is also used in several of the engineering lessons as well. It does not go into great depth, but is a good foundational teaching tool.</p>
<b>OR</b>	
Most 1 - 18	<p><i>Professor Astro Cat's Atomic Adventure</i> by Dr. Dominic Walliman and Ben Newman ISBN 978-1-909263-60-4</p> <p>This is the other option for the main physics spine for Wonders 1 - 18, and in some ways is the stronger contender. We recommend looking closely at both options (via preview on Amazon) before choosing.</p>
3, 5, 11 - 16, 18	<p><i>DK Find Out! Energy</i> by Emily Dodd ISBN 978-1-46547445-2</p> <p>We feel that this resource fills out the energy, force, and motion units more than the two books listed above. For this reason, it is recommended as a supplement for the listed Wonders.</p>
Most 1 - 18	<p><i>The Way Things Work Now</i> by David Macaulay ISBN 978-0-544-82439-6</p> <p>The main spine for the engineering portion of Wonders 1 - 18, recommended for ages 9 and up.</p>
1 - 4	<p><i>Engineered! Engineering Design at Work</i> by Shannon Hunt and James Gulliver Hancock ISBN 978-1-77138-560-2</p> <p>An excellent introduction to engineering and the engineering process. Could be assigned as independent reading for a confident reader, age 9+.</p>
All 19 - 36	<p><i>DK Smithsonian Human Body!</i> ISBN 978-1-4654-6239-8</p> <p>This is one option for the anatomy portion of the curriculum, covered in Wonders 19 - 36. We chose this spine primarily for its visual content.</p>
<b>OR</b>	
All 20 - 36	<p><i>The Fantastic Body: What Makes You Tick and How You Get Sick</i> by Dr. Howard Bennett ISBN 978-1-62336-889-0</p> <p>This is the second option for the anatomy portion of the curriculum, covered in Wonders 19 - 36. This spine was chosen more for its informational content and approachable tone for elementary learners. You could certainly combine both of the anatomy spines, if you'd like.</p>
Most 19 - 36	<p><i>Anatomicum</i> Curated by Katy Wiedemann and Jennifer Z Paxton ISBN 978-1-78741-492-1</p> <p>A good alternative to the DK anatomy book for visual learners and fans of the <i>Welcome to the Museum</i> series. Not as extensive as the DK book, but the illustrations are wonderful.</p>