

Hartland Junior Kindergarten Program

The Junior Kindergarten curriculum is primarily focused on developing the reading and writing skills of the students and preparing the child for Kindergarten.

Overall School Academic Framework – Junior Kindergarten

Language Arts:

- Pre-reading skills: oral language, phonemic awareness, concepts about print, letter and sound identification
- Emergent reading: using meaning and pattern to support emergent reading, one-to-one correspondence, left to right movement across text, return sweep, and noticing the picture matches the words
- Handwriting – letter formation
- Interactive writing: learning to say words slowly and record letters for the sounds heard
- Shared reading: modeled and guided reading of familiar big books to learn concepts about print, letters, sounds, story structure, and the joy of reading
- Read aloud: to learn language, vocabulary, story structure, and the joy of reading

Math

- Sorting similar objects to develop visual discrimination skills necessary in order to learn numbers and letters
- Number sense: counting objects and making groups

Fine motor: center work designed to strengthen hand muscles and hand-eye coordination

Social/emotional skills: taught through centers, games, songs, stories, recess and daily routines

Essentials: Physical Education, Music, Art, Media/Computers

LANGUAGE ARTS

Oral Language Development:

This is the process of communicating through speaking and listening. Speaking and listening are the foundation for learning. Language acquisition and language development skills interact and influence each other. Speaking, listening, reading and writing are all integrated through all activities in the Junior Kindergarten classroom.

Vocabulary Development:

Research suggests that vocabulary is enormously important to children's development, especially in reading. Research clearly indicates that children with larger vocabularies have higher school achievement in general (Smith, 1941, cited in Beck, McKeown, and Kucan, 2002) and higher reading achievement in particular (Anderson and Freebody, 1981; Graves, 1986; Stahl, 1998). Growth in vocabulary is done naturally through wide reading and discussion with other students and the teacher in Junior Kindergarten.

Read Aloud Activities:

Studies indicate that children do learn vocabulary from books read aloud to them (e.g., Elley, 1989). Teachers read engaging fiction and nonfiction texts that feature important concepts and vocabulary. The imaginative illustrations further encourage exploration and discussion, prompting children to develop a love of reading.

Pre-reading Skills:

Students are taught the principles of phonemic awareness and alphabet recognition. To develop phonemic awareness, the program: (1) incorporates nursery rhymes; (2) ties instruction to children names; (3) teaches children to use the position of their mouths, to recognize sounds and letter names; (4) encourages students to say sounds in words slowly; (5) helps children develop letter sounds and letter names simultaneously; (6) helps children make connections between sounds they hear and the letter/s to write; (7) teaches rhyming sounds using rhymes and songs; and (8) infuses instruction with Interactive White Boards, charts, posters, big books, small books, games and numerous writing experiences.

In addition, students are engaged by multiple methods to develop alphabet recognition such as charts, posters, pointing to letters, ABC books, letter cards, writing letters, teaching features of letters, molding letters with clay or other materials, reading with a teacher, following along as a teacher reads, singing and using many manipulative and writing experiences.

Pre-writing skills:

Junior kindergartners benefit from experiences that support the development of fine motor skills in the hands and fingers. Children need strength and dexterity in their hands and fingers in order to manipulate a pencil on paper. Students will participate in daily center and classroom activities such as manipulating clay, using tongs to pick up and move items, lacing, tracing, cutting, and drawing to strengthen those muscles.

Math

Students will be able to do one-to-one correspondence, simple patterns, simple counting using materials and learn to recognize geometric shapes.

Media/Computers (once a week)

Students will listen to stories, use the computer games to learn the alphabet and numbers and experience the wonder of the media center.

Art (once a week)

Students will enjoy using different art media to indulge their imagination.

Music (once a week)

The music classes are developmentally appropriate celebrating the importance of music, while nurturing the rhythm and pattern so naturally planted in a child's brain. Music stimulates learning, lowers stress, and advances memory, attention, and brain development.

Physical Education (once a week)

The goals of the pre-elementary school physical education program are:

1. Opportunities to grow and develop large motor skills and muscles.
2. Teamwork – students will learn to play as a team member, learn to work together towards a common goal and be composed and respectful at all times.