

Junior Kindergarten Reading

Maumee Valley Country Day School believes that language is at the heart of learning. It is fundamental to the curriculum as a basic tool of communication that crosses the boundaries of the traditional disciplines and provides access to literature. It is a means of assimilating our own culture and learning about the cultures of others.

The Lower School places particular emphasis on language acquisition and development, which do more than promote cognitive growth. It is crucial for exploring and sustaining cultural identity, personal development, and intercultural understanding; such emphases are integral to the Maumee Valley mission, vision, and philosophy.

The specific reading expectations in Junior Kindergarten are based on a developmental continuum we created based on the Ohio Birth Through Kindergarten Entry Learning and Development Standards, Lucy Calkins' Readers Workshop, and Australia's First Steps developmental continuums. Our continuum identifies a series of stages through which children move in the development of reading skills and behaviors. Students progress through the developmental stages at individual rates, although some stages can be matched with specific grade levels. Each stage is associated with a set of processes and strategies used by teachers during lessons to facilitate the continued development of each child's pre-reading abilities.

Junior Kindergartners are learning to understand the value of speaking and listening to communicate. They are starting to recognize that sounds are associated with objects, or with symbolic representations of them. In reading, students are



learning that print represents the real or the imaginary world. Furthermore, students are beginning to understand that reading gives them knowledge and pleasure; that it can be a social activity or an individual activity. Children display reading-like behaviors when interacting with a variety of books. They rely heavily on topic knowledge, pictures, and memorization when 'reading' texts previously heard. In writing, students are beginning to understand that writing is used to convey meaning or messages. They may emulate adults' writing by experimenting with marks to represent written language.

"Readers" in Junior Kindergarten will understand ...

- visual language is all around us.
- the pictures, images, and symbols in our environment have meaning.
- we can enjoy and learn from visual language.
- illustrations convey meaning.
- print conveys meaning.
- people read for pleasure.
- stories can tell about imaginary worlds.
- printed information can tell about the real world.
- there are established ways of displaying print and organizing books.

"Readers" in Junior Kindergarten will be able to ...

- join in with chants, poems, songs, word games and clapping games, gaining familiarity with the sounds and patterns of the language of instruction.
- show curiosity and ask questions about pictures or text.
- identify and talks about different characters or people from texts.
- actively participate in shared reading and read-alouds.
- actively participate in games involving rhymes, refrains, chants, poems, songs, word games, and clapping.
- recognize their own first and last name.

- understand directionality and experiment with 1-to-1 correspondence when "reading."
- understand that print is permanent (the message stays the same).
- experiment with using the beginning letter as a strategy to read unknown words.
- explore and discuss fictional characters and settings.
- begin to make text-to-self connections.
- wonder and ask questions about texts and ask meaningful questions to gain deeper understanding.
- use information from the text to make predictions.
- retell a simple story in sequence.
- begin to understand that fiction and non-fiction have different purposes.
- begin to identify the features of non-fiction text.
- identify some letters of the alphabet and their sounds.
- understand that letters, words and sentences are different to each other.
- make connections to own experience when listening to or "reading" texts.
- begin to compare self to characters and events in texts.
- express an opinion about a text.
- show empathy for characters in a story.
- listen to and demonstrate comprehension by talking about significant ideas from the text.

Junior Kindergarten Writing

Writing helps us make sense of the world. It is a powerful means by which to remember, develop, organize, and communicate ideas, feelings, and information. The purpose and audience contribute to the form and substance of writing, as well as to its style and tone.

The writing process involves creating an environment where students can acquire the skills to accomplish written products for a variety of purposes. These written products can be formal, informal, personal, or reflective. They can be informative, persuasive, poetic, or in the form of a story or dialogue.

Learning to write is a developmental process, and students need to be able to focus at first on meaning rather than accuracy. Grammar, spelling, handwriting, punctuation, and paragraphing should be taught gradually through writing practice.

The specific writing expectations in Junior Kindergarten are based on a developmental continuum we created based on the Ohio Birth Through Kindergarten Entry Learning and Development Standards, Lucy Calkins' Writer's Workshop, Handwriting Without Tears, and Australia's First Steps developmental continuums. Teachers in Junior Kindergarten use our writing continuum to map each child's progress and achievement in writing. Our continuum identifies a series of stages through which children move in the development of



Fine motor skills gradually build for children as they do activities to help strengthen their muscles and coordination. In the early years, fine motor activities help children refine their pincer grasp (grasping an object with their thumb and pointer finger using their preferred hand) and are a precursor to handwriting. By practicing picking up, manipulating, and exercising the small muscles in the palm, children are working towards gaining control and strength while coloring, drawing, cutting, and forming letters or writing.

writing skills and behaviors. Although students progress through the developmental stages at individual rates, sets of stages can be matched with specific grade levels.

Each stage is associated with a set of processes and strategies used by teachers during lessons to facilitate the continued development of each child's writing abilities. In Junior Kindergarten, the role that language plays is important in everyday life to communicate stories, ideas, and feelings. This is explored through play, stories, songs, games, role play, and conversations. Children are also encouraged to explore how people communicate with each other through mark-making, drawings, and having the teacher scribe.

Fine motor skills involve the use of the small muscles that control the hand, fingers, and thumb. They help children perform important tasks like feeding themselves, grasping toys, buttoning and zipping clothes, writing, drawing, and more.

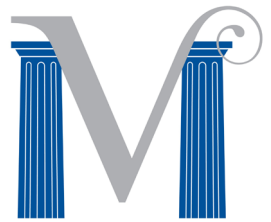
"Writers" in Junior Kindergarten will understand...

- writing conveys meaning.
- people write to tell about their experiences, ideas, and feelings.
- everyone can express themselves in writing.
- talking about our stories and pictures helps other people to understand and enjoy the

"Writers" in Junior Kindergarten will be able to...

- identify the letters of the alphabet by name and by common sounds.
- match letters to sounds.
- begin to demonstrate understanding of the conventions of print.
- use a limited range of strategies to spell (sounding out).
- use significant sounds in words (ktn - kitten, wacht - watched) when writing.
- use word learning strategies (word wall, environmental print).
- write using simple language structures.
- with modeling and support, notice and sporadically use punctuation in writing.
- knows syllabification.
- provides reasons why people write.
- understand the value of written language in society as a means of communication.
- use writing with the intention of communicating a message.

- state purpose or audience for own writing.
- provide reasons why people write.
- participate in group brainstorming activities to elicit ideas before writing.
- participate in shared research and writing projects.
- with guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather.
- information from provided sources to answer a question.
- use a 3 finger grasp of dominant hand to hold writing tool.
- share and celebrate own writing with others.
- participate in independent, shared and interactive writing.
- take ideas from mini-lessons and try these out in own writing.
- actively participate in writing conferences with teacher and/or peers and try to extend and improve own writing.
- write a story using pictures.
- write independently for an appropriate amount of time.
- draw and write to tell about their experiences, ideas and feelings.
- understand that ideas can be represented by drawings, letters and numbers.
- assigns a message to own drawn and written symbols.
- differentiate between illustrations and written text.
- begin to differentiate between drawings, letters and numbers.
- write strings of symbols that look like letters; might include numerals.
- write own name independently.



Junior Kindergarten

MAUMEE VALLEY COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL

Junior Kindergarten At A Glance

Faculty & Staff

Classroom faculty & staff

Amy Dankert (adankert@mvcds.org)

Alex Kania (akania@mvcds.org)

Christine Marker (cmarker@mvcds.org)

Maggie Reed (mreed@mvcds.org)

Specials faculty

Art: Crystal Borchert (cborchert@mvcds.org)

Library: Renee Moebius (rmoebius@mvcds.org)

Music: Jenica Fox (jfox@mvcds.org)

Physical education: Heather Rakosik (hrakosik@mvcds.org)

Spanish: Kathleen Mick (kmick@mvcds.org)

Leadership & Staff

Head of Lower School

Michelle Savickas (msavickas@mvcds.org)

Lower School/Middle School administrative assistant

Megan Gray (mgray@mvcds.org)

Junior Kindergarten Schedule

8-8:15 a.m.: Arrival, check in, morning jobs

8:20-9 a.m.: Learning centers and small-group learning

9 a.m.: Morning meeting

9:30 a.m.: Snack

10 a.m.: Forest School

11:45 a.m.: Dismissal for half-day students

12-12:30 p.m.: Lunch, story time

12:30-1:45 p.m.: Rest, quiet activities

1:45-2:15 p.m.: Afternoon snack

2:15-2:40 p.m.: Indoor learning centers or playground

2:40 p.m.: Closing circle

2:50 p.m.: Dismissal

(One afternoon each week, students have Forest School. Family volunteers are welcome.)

Tips to support your child's learning inside your home

- Read to your child at least 15 minutes every night. Reading and discussing books makes a significant difference in a child's literacy development.
- Make math a part of everyday life. Count stairs, search for shapes, make up math story problems, etc.
- Explore and observe nature.
- Set up routines that encourage independence.
- Get a good night's sleep.
- Promote a positive attitude toward others. Model Kindness.
- Talk with your child daily about their learning in your first language.
- Model a love of reading. Let your child see you enjoy reading.
- Arrange play dates for your child to play with classmates after school and on the weekends. As well as plenty of time for family activities and playing outside.

Junior Kindergarten events

Field Trips

- Sept. 9: Gust Brothers' Pumpkin Farm
- Nov. 9: W.W. Knight Nature Preserve
- March 13: Botanical Gardens
- April 17: Toledo Grows
- May 22: Glass City Metropark

Performances

- Nov. 21: Fall harvest family celebration (morning)
- May 17: K/1 concert and art show

Special Events

- Oct. 5: Picnic dinner and s'mores campfire. 5-7 p.m. Anning Lawn
- Oct. 31: Halloween Party
- Nov. 21: Get Back, Give Back Day. 2:15 p.m.
- Feb. 14: Valentine's Day Party
- April 8: Solar eclipse viewing party (early dismissal at 1 p.m.)
- April 27: MV Annual Gala
- May 31: Lower School Field Day and family picnic

Late Start Dates: April 25, May 13

Parent-Teacher Conferences: Oct. 26-27 and April 11-12

2023 Lower School Back to School Night

JK Curricula & Programs

UNITS OF INQUIRY

Maumee Valley believes that students learn best through inquiry, where they are actively involved in their own learning and take responsibility for that learning. All learning, be that in the homeroom or single-subject sessions, is approached with a spirit of inquiry. Inquiry nurtures curiosity and promotes enthusiasm for lifelong learning; it encourages students to think, challenge, and extend their ideas, and it prompts students to reflect and take action. The inquiry process builds capacity through student agency where voice, choice, and ownership feature strongly. Students also develop and demonstrate the approaches to learning skills and the attributes of a lifelong learner as they become knowledgeable inquirers. Drawing from the interdisciplinary themes and students' interests, inquiry is an authentic way for students to relate to, explore, and understand the world around them. By situating inquiry in meaningful contexts, connections are made between personal experiences and local and global opportunities and challenges. Play, problem-based learning, collaboration, experimentation, and explicit teaching all have a place within an inquiry-based classroom.

- **Let's Be Friends.** Central ideas: Mindful choices help me make and keep friends.
- **Communication Through Art.** Central ideas: Artwork can be used to communicate and express ourselves.
- **I Wonder.** Central ideas: We can explore and wonder about the outdoor world around us through our play.
- **Make Sense.** Central ideas: Senses help us explore the world in different ways.

Passion Projects

PK/JK Passion Projects are student driven with teacher and family support. Following the interests and ideas of the children, PK/JK families, teachers, and students work together on an end-of-year project that gives back to the greater community in some way. The purpose of the PK/JK Passion Project is to introduce collaborative inquiry and research skills, which students will continue to develop further in the primary years. Projects are hands-on, and children play an active role in helping them come to life. With the community as the central focus of the project, children develop empathy for others and begin to understand that they have the power to make the world a better place.

Student Support

The Lower School Student Support Team is made up of the school nurse Sherrie Watkins; school psychologist Sara Dowling; Lower School counselor Betsey van de Heijning; and intervention specialist Jill Augustyniak. The team meets with the teachers and division head monthly to discuss challenges and brainstorm solutions that faculty, students, and families are facing in our community. We develop proactive academic intervention and social-emotional support. The goal is to advocate for students in a positive way; focus on strengths to help overcome challenges; educate on neurodiversity, learning styles, learning theory, and psychology within and through the

lens of diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging; and approach all students with the understanding that no one wants to fail or be unsuccessful. From the support meetings, we determine next steps that may include observations, additional meetings, outside services, and evaluations. If the team determines accommodations, remediation, enrichment, intervention, or specifically designed instruction is needed, then classroom accommodations, an education plan, or a service plan is written.

Social-Emotional

SEL concepts provide an extra dimension to education, focusing on improving cooperation, communication, and decision making. In a world where emotional intelligence is critical for lifelong happiness, successful careers, and healthier relationships, SEL gives students a framework for developing these skills. Maumee Valley's Junior Kindergarten class supports the skills of observation, organization, and problem-solving. The transition to symbolic expression has begun. Students practice using writing and drawing to express their thoughts and feelings. Small- and large-group work becomes more meaningful as students exchange ideas with each other. At this age, students start to develop preferences for certain children in the class and ultimately wrestle with the idea of "who are my friends?" Through careful scaffolding, teachers use this new level of interaction between students to empower them to learn from each other, develop empathy, and enhance their ability to function as a cohesive group. Meeting time becomes an integral part of the curriculum as students learn to listen to each other, identify and express their feelings, and to solve a problem working together to retain and restore the community.

Specials in the Lower School Library

Library time is all about helping our little bookworms grow and thrive! On a weekly basis, the librarian visits the classroom where children have the opportunity to listen to stories and participate in fun-filled age-appropriate activities. The program features books, puppets, music, movement, science activities, videos and/or crafts to encourage early literacy skills in young children. In addition, our library welcomes mystery readers throughout the year. If you'd like to read, we'd love to hear from you! Save these dates for library events:

- Visiting author TBA: Week of Oct. 24.
- Book Fair: Oct. 24- 28.
- Lower School book Swap: January 2024.
- Book Fair: April 8-12.

Spanish

The Spanish program focuses on making the language a rewarding conversational and cultural tool that students carry into their lives and into the world. Movement, singing, storytelling, role-playing, chants, and games are all a substantial part of learning at the early levels. In addition to weekly organized activities, highlights in Junior Kindergarten include Spanish during Forest School and Spanish centers. Parent communication is conducted through email and Storypark.

Junior Kindergarten Math



Discovering math through exploration and play

The purpose of learning mathematics is to help children construct meaning and make connections to understand their ever-changing world. All students will have the opportunity and support necessary to learn significant mathematics with depth and understanding, thereby developing confidence and an enduring interest in mathematics. Students will become fluent users of the language of mathematics as they learn to understand its meaning, symbols, and conventions. A rich mathematical curriculum progresses through the essential cognitive stages of:

- **Constructing meaning:** Learning experiences are planned through which students construct meaning from direct experiences by using manipulatives and conversation.
- **Transferring meaning into symbols:** Students begin to understand that numerals represent a collection of objects.
- **Understanding and applying:** Teachers plan authentic learning

experiences in which students independently apply the knowledge they've learned in whole and small group instruction. The curriculum is divided into five subject areas: Number, Measurement, Data handling, Space and shape, and Pattern and function. **(The chart on the right defines each, outlines the conceptual understandings, and skills to be acquired.)** Students in Junior Kindergarten continue to develop an awareness of mathematics in the environment such as shape, pattern, and numbers in everyday life. They are starting to reason with amounts of materials and will explore how number words can be used to signify an amount and order. There is a focus on distinguishing numerals from other written symbols. They are learning that mathematical data can be represented using real objects, models, and pictures. Furthermore, students are beginning to understand that collections of objects with various attributes can be sorted and resorted in different ways. Their work with patterns includes

Definition	Conceptual understandings	Skills
Number Our number system is a language for describing quantities and relationships between quantities. The value attributed to a digit depends on its place within a base system. The operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division are related to one another and are used to process information to solve problems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number words can be used to signify an amount of a collection.• We count to find out how many are in a collection.• Whole numbers are in a particular order.• Numerals are different from other written symbols.• We can often see how many are in a collection just by looking and thinking of it in parts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Show that number words can be used to signify an amount of a collection• Participate in number songs and rhymes• Count in sequence from 1-10 (rote)• Choose counting to find out how many• Demonstrate understanding that whole numbers are in a particular order• Accurately count small collections to find out how many (at least up to 5)• Select at least three objects from a collection (count out)• Tell how many are in a collection by looking and thinking in parts• Subitize a collection of objects up to three• Identify the difference between numerals and other written symbols• Recognize written numerals 1-3
Measurement To measure is to attach a number quantity using a chosen unit. However, since the attributes being measured are continuous, ways must be found to deal with quantities that fall between numbers. It is important to know how accurate a measure needs to be or can ever be.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Objects are identified and can be compared, by their attributes• There are special words and phrases that help us to describe and compare attributes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore quantity and size with measuring equipment• Order a series of 5 objects by size• Use opposite terms for size (large-small, short-long)• Associate social and personal events with time• Ask questions that can be researched in action• Compare objects by attributes that are different• Use terms small, medium and large to define objects in comparison to each other• Compare attributes of objects using non-standard measurements• Make judgments about order and size without actually measuring
Data Handling Statistics: Data can be recorded, organized, displayed, and made sense of in a variety of ways to highlight similarities, differences, and trends. It is important to remember that the chosen format should illustrate the information without bias. Probability: This idea is very difficult for very young students because they view the world as a place of all possibilities. Appropriate qualitative vocabulary may be introduced such as "unlikely," "certain," and "impossible," as suggested by the exploration and experiences of the students.	Objects are sorted according to specific and constant attributes (such as by size or color).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use words and phrases that describe and compare attributes (size, shape, color)• Sort objects according to specific and constant attributes (color, size, or shape)• Match and sort a collection of objects according to one attribute (color, size or shape)• Make object collections based on one attribute
Shape and Space The regions, paths, and boundaries of natural space can be described by space. Students need to understand the interrelationships of shapes and the effects of changes to shape in order to understand, appreciate, interpret, and modify the two-dimensional world.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We describe where things are in relation to other things.• There are special words, phrases, and symbols that help us do this.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe where things are in relation to other things (in, on top, under, behind, beside, etc.)• Distinguish shape from other attributes (such as color, shape, and size)• Match familiar shapes• Recognize and draw some basic 2D shapes (circle, triangle, square)• Complete a 12 piece puzzle• Understand that a whole can be divided into parts and that the parts can be brought back together to make up the whole
Pattern and Function To identify a pattern is to understand how mathematics applies to the world in which we live. The repetitive features of patterns can be identified and described as generalized rules called functions. This builds the foundation for the later study of algebra.	A pattern is repetitive, rhythmic, and sequential (AB, ABC).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Copy and continue 2-part patterns• Draw repetitive lines and shapes (such as draw a row of circles)• Identify patterns in nature• Interpret daily schedule picture cards