

**Dear Parents,**

This eight-week unit invites students to compare how animals, especially horses, dogs, and mice, are portrayed in fiction and nonfiction.

**Animals Are Characters, Too: Characters Who Gallop, Bark and Squeak**

“Why do authors use animals as characters?”

“How do authors use animals in fiction and non-fiction differently?”

**Reading Literature and Informational Text**

When reading literature, students will use details from a text to help them summarize. They will be able to describe the characters, setting, and events in a story or a drama and determine the theme. Students will explain the main differences between poems, drama, and poetry. Point of view becomes a focus in this unit as students learn the difference between first and third person narrations. When reading informational text, students will determine the main idea and explain how the main idea is supported by details. They will examine how authors use reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text and learn to use facts from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject.

Reading Foundational Skills (Word Knowledge and Fluency)

Students will read books and poems fluently with purpose and understanding. They will use knowledge about letter sounds, syllable patterns and the meanings of roots and affixes to aid in reading multisyllabic words.

Writing

When writing stories, students will develop real or imagined experiences or events. They will share their ideas by using dialogue, sensory details, and transitional words such as *in the beginning*, *later*, and *finally* to manage the sequence of events. Students will also conduct short research projects drawing information from both print and digital sources. They will strengthen their writing by planning, revising, and editing their work.

Listening and Speaking

Students will discuss grade-level topics and texts in groups. They will ask and answer questions to contribute to the discussion and elaborate on the remarks of others. Students will be expected to paraphrase portions of a text read aloud and report on a topic adding visual displays to enhance the development of their main idea.

Language (Conventions of Standard English and Vocabulary)

Students will use progressive verb tenses such as *I was walking*, *I am walking*, *I will be walking*, and prepositional phrases, when speaking and writing. They will sequence adjectives within sentences according to conventional patterns, such as, *a small, red bag* rather than *a red, small bag*. Students will practice using correct punctuation when writing dialogue and using conjunctions in compound sentences. They will continue to use correct capitalization and spell grade-appropriate words correctly, using references as needed. Explaining the meaning of idioms such as, *it's raining cats and dogs*, is a focus in this unit.

Handwriting& Keyboarding

Fourth graders are expected to maintain legible manuscript and cursive on lined paper with proper proportion, size and spacing. They will continue using keyboarding skills for a variety of class work. Students will consistently use the home keys and type words and sentences without looking at the keyboard. They will practice using Spell Check and Thesaurus.