



# Partners in LEARNING

GUILFORD COUNTY SCHOOLS 2007 - 2008

Dear Parent/Guardian:

We welcome your child to a successful seventh grade year. This brochure provides an overview of what will be taught this year in each subject area. There are also sample learning activities and developmental characteristics for this age group, as well as suggested reading. We hope you will find this information helpful as you work with your child at home to reinforce the concepts taught at this grade level.

Parents play a key role in their child's school success as we focus on improving achievement for all students and preparing seventh graders for the eighth grade gateway. You will be informed about the statewide accountability standards by your school and may also access this information on Guilford County Schools' web site at [www.gcsnc.com](http://www.gcsnc.com). In addition, we urge you to monitor progress through interim reports, teacher conferences and daily conversations with your child about schoolwork. Also, carefully review report cards and test results, and communicate frequently with your child's teachers.

We look forward to being partners in learning with you throughout your child's school career.

Sincerely,

Terry B. Grier, Superintendent

## Developmental Characteristics

Children develop in a natural progression of growth, moving through predictable stages of development. Not all children move through these phases at the same pace. Children pass through developmental stages at their own rates.

Students, ages twelve to fourteen, in grades six through eight, are similar in the ways they learn. They learn by doing, experiencing and using their senses. Some general characteristics for thirteen-year-olds are as follows:

- Displays a wide range of skills and abilities
- Ranges from the concrete stage to the ability to deal with the abstract
- Is very curious and growing in mental ability
- Prefers active learning activities
- Prefers interaction with peers during learning activities
- Is willing to learn useful things
- Shows heightened self-centeredness
- Will argue to convince others or to clarify own thinking
- Begins to show independent, critical thinking

## Information Skills (Media)

- Participates in reading aloud, storytelling, book talking, and self-selected reading experiences
- Distinguishes the characteristics of poetry, fiction and nonfiction
- Acknowledges ownership of ideas
- Describes the societal, political, cultural, economic and historical influences on information and ideas
- Follows acceptable use policy for electronic resources
- Applies fair use copyright guidelines
- Explores primary and secondary sources of information
- Credits the sources of information in print, nonprint and electronic products
- Produces media in various formats appropriate to audience and purpose
- Accesses and uses NC Wise Owl to meet informational research needs
- Recognizes the power of media to influence
- Demonstrates positive behavior in the use of computer technology
- Respects library resources, facilities, and personnel

## Favorite Authors and Poets of Seventh Graders

Adoff, Arnold  
Alexander, Lloyd  
Avi  
Cooper, Susan (*Grey King Series*)  
Cormier, Robert  
Creech, Sharon  
Fleischman, Paul  
Freedman, Russell  
Fritz, Jean (*Biographies*)  
Hamilton, Virginia  
Hansen, Joyce  
Hobbs, Will  
Jacques, Brian (*Redwall Series*)  
Jones, Diana Wynne  
L'Engle, Madeleine  
MacLachlan, Patricia  
Myers, Walter Dean  
Paterson, Katherine  
Paulsen, Gary  
Peck, Richard  
Peterson's Field Guides  
Rowling, J. K.  
Silverstein, Shel  
Stanley, Diane (*Biographies*)  
Taylor, Mildred  
Tolkein, J.R.R.  
Voight, Cynthia  
Yep, Laurence

## Reading

- Narrates an account such as a news story or historical episode
- Explores expressive materials that are read, heard and viewed
- Interacts in group settings by responding appropriately, offering personal opinions and soliciting and respecting another person's opinion
- Reflects on learning experiences
- Responds to informational materials that are read, heard and/or viewed
- Develops information products and/or presentations that use and cite at least three print or non-print sources
- Analyzes public documents that establishes a position or point-of-view
- Uses the problem-solution process
- Creates arguments that evaluate by stating a firm judgment and justifying the judgment
- Analyzes the purpose of the author or creator
- Develops (with assistance) and applies appropriate criteria to evaluate the quality of a communication
- Develops the stance of a critic
- Increases fluency, comprehension and insight through a meaningful and comprehensive reading program
- Studies the characteristics of literary genres
- Models an understanding of conventional written and spoken expression



## Favorite Books of Seventh Graders

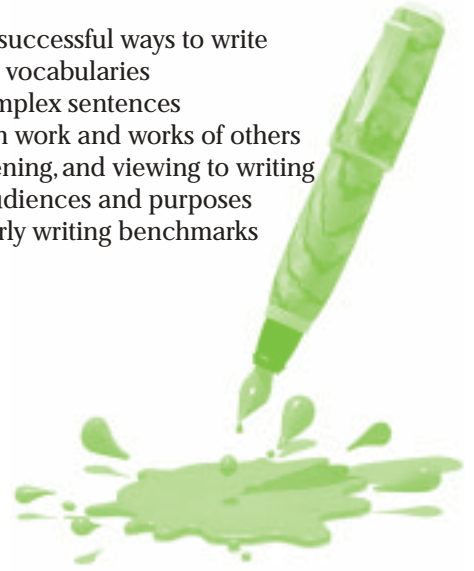
*The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*, Avi  
*The Incredible Journey*, Sheila Burnford  
*Catherine Called Birdy*, Karen Cushman  
*Boy: Going Solo*, Roald Dahl  
*Joyful Noise: Poems for 2 Voices*, Paul Fleischman  
*Julie of the Wolves*, Jean Craighead George  
*Many African Voices*, Virginia Hamilton  
*The House of Wisdom*, Florence Parry Heide  
*Bearstone*, Will Hobbs  
*Lift Every Voice and Sing*, James Weldon Johnson  
*Big Red*, Jim Kjelgaard  
*Pyramid*, David Macaulay

*Salting the Ocean: 100 Poems by Young Poets*, Naomi Shihab Nye, editor  
*Island of the Blue Dolphins*, Scott O'Dell  
*Where the Red Fern Grows*, Wilson Rawls  
*Holes*, Louis Sachar  
*Under the Blood-Red Sun*, Graham Salisbury  
*Squids will be Squids: Fresh Morals*, *Baseball in April and Other Stories*, Gary Soto  
*The Pearl*, John Steinbeck  
*The Hobbit*, J.R.R. Tolkein  
*Dragonwings*, Laurence Yep  
*The Mary Celeste: An Unsolved Mystery from History*, Jane Yolen and Elisabet Yolen Stemple

## Writing

- Experiences modeling of good literature
- Writes often and on many different topics
- Uses writing to express thoughts and emotions
- Uses prewriting strategies including graphic organizers
- Writes to give a clear message
- Compares different writing samples (including his or her own)
- Uses rubrics to judge the effectiveness of strong organization, well-chosen details, and appropriate language.
- Records learning experiences day-by-day

- Identifies and shares successful ways to write
- Incorporates growing vocabularies
- Uses longer, more complex sentences
- Revises and edits own work and works of others
- Relates speaking, listening, and viewing to writing
- Writes for multiple audiences and purposes
- Participates in quarterly writing benchmarks



## Writing Process

**Prewriting** is the process that helps writers prepare to write. The student spends time gathering information, using graphic organizers, experimenting with ideas, and plotting a course. Prewriting is essential to the writing process.

**Drafting** is the stage of making choices about the content of an essay. This is the student's first attempt at writing a piece.

**Revising** is essential in the writing process. It is the correction of usage and mechanics as well as the step which permits a student to improve the writing content.

**Editing** occurs only after the writer feels satisfied with the content and organization of the writing. This step allows a student to remove errors that would distract the reader.

**Publishing** provides a chance for students to complete a product, see themselves as "authors," read with appreciation and learn from others.

## Guidance

- Realizes the importance of building self-confidence
- Gives and receives positive comments
- Responds to criticism without being devastated
- Demonstrates assertive behavior, i.e., how to say "no" to peers
- Recognizes that planning and organization contribute to success
- Demonstrates a knowledge of the world of work
- Demonstrates skills in making educational decisions and choosing alternatives in planning for life goals
- Becomes aware of the many decisions she/he makes daily and recognizes that all decisions are not clear-cut (right/wrong, good/bad)
- Demonstrates an awareness of alternative points of view
- Discusses/identifies the kinds of activities/events that cause stress and conflict
- Demonstrates being responsible in a group
- Identifies alternatives when peer pressures are in conflict with her/his own value system
- Develops appropriate same gender and opposite gender friendships
- Demonstrates an awareness of interdependence
- Recognizes that a changing world demands lifelong learning and planning
- Recognizes that physiological changes are a natural part of adolescence
- Recognizes the importance of emotional growth and how emotions affect behavior
- Deals with some disturbing feeling that has been bothering her/him

## Advanced Learner Program

Advanced Learners are described as students who demonstrate remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience or environment.

In language arts and/or mathematics, all Advanced Learners receive appropriate differentiated instruction in the regular classroom. In these subjects, students who are found eligible at the *Strong* level or above participate in rigorous courses. Additionally, differentiated activities in Science and/or Social Studies are provided through appropriate instructional strategies within the regular classroom for all Advanced Learners.

Students found eligible for *Very Strong* services may choose to participate in full-time classes designed to meet their needs at a separate school location.



# Mathematics

## Number & Operation

- Develop and use ratios, proportions, and percents to solve problems
- Develop fluency in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of rational numbers
  - Analyze computational strategies
  - Describe the effect of operations on size
  - Estimate the results of computations
  - Judge the reasonableness of solutions
- Develop flexibility in solving problems by selecting strategies and using mental computation, estimation, calculators or computers, and paper and pencil
- Write whole numbers in scientific notation; convert scientific notation to standard form; investigate the uses of scientific notation
- Use geometric models to develop the meaning of the square of a number and its positive square root; investigate and estimate square root, checking the results with a calculator
- Use rules of exponents

## Measurement

- Draw objects to scale and use scale drawings to solve problems
- Solve problems involving volume and surface area of cylinders, prisms, and composite shapes
- Recognize the effect on the area and perimeter when one or two dimensions of a plane figure are changed

## Geometry

- Using three-dimensional figures:
  - Identify, describe, and draw from various views (top, side, front, corner)
  - Build from various views
  - Describe cross-sectional views
- Identify, define, and describe similar and congruent polygons with respect to angle measures, length of sides, and proportionality of sides
- Use scaling and proportional reasoning to solve problems related to similar and congruent polygons

## Data Analysis & Probability

- Collect, organize, analyze, and display data (including box plots and histograms) to solve problems.
- Calculate, use, and interpret the mean, median, mode, range, frequency distribution, and inter-quartile range of a set of data
- Describe how the mean, median, mode, range, frequency distribution, and inter-quartile range of a set data affect its graph
- Identify outliers and determine their effect on the mean, median, mode, and range of a set of data
- Solve problems involving two or more sets of data using appropriate statistical measures

## Algebra

- Identify, analyze, and create linear relations; sequences, and functions using symbols, graphs, tables, diagrams, and written descriptions
- Translate among different representations of algebraic expressions, equations and inequalities
- Use and evaluate algebraic expressions, linear equations or inequalities to solve problems
- Develop fluency in the use of formulas to solve problems



## Related Books

- Anno's Mysterious Multiplying Jar*, Masaichiro Anno  
*Math Tricks, Puzzles and Games*, Raymond Blum  
*Measuring Up! Experiments, Puzzles and Games Exploring Measurement*, Sandra Markle  
*Career Ideas for Kids Who Like Math*, Diane Lindsey Reeves  
*Circles: Fun Ideas for Getting A-Round in Math*, Catherine Ross  
*The History of Counting*, Denise Schmandt-Besserat  
*Math Curse*, Jon Scieszka and Lane Smith

# Science

## Scientific Inquiry

- Generates questions and hypotheses that can be answered through scientific investigations
- Develops appropriate experimental procedures for questions
- Applies safety procedures in laboratory and field studies
- Identifies variables in scientific investigations:
  - Identify dependent and independent variables
  - Use of a control
  - Define operationally
- Uses mathematics to gather, organize, and present quantitative data resulting from scientific investigations
- Prepares models and simulations to test hypotheses
- Uses oral and written language to communicate findings and defend conclusions
- Utilizes technology to research, gather and analyze data, visualize data, and disseminate findings
- Analyzes information from a scientifically literate viewpoint by accessing scientific text and press articles

## Technological Design

- Describes many concepts of “technology”
- Uses technology to identify scientific needs and locate resources
- Evaluates technological designs for application of scientific principles, risks and benefits, and constraints
- Applies tenets of technological design to make informed consumer decisions

## Atmosphere

- Explains the composition, properties, and structure of the atmosphere
- Describes properties that can be observed and measured to predict air quality:
  - Particulate matter
  - Ozone
- Examines the monitoring of air quality and actions taken to maintain healthy air
- Evaluates how humans impact air quality including:
  - Air quality standards
  - Local air quality issues
  - Point and non- point sources of air pollution in North Carolina
  - Financial and economic trade-offs
- Examines how weather hazards and atmospheric conditions are predicted:
  - Humidity
  - Wind speed and direction
  - Precipitation
  - Temperature
  - Air pressure
  - Convective storms
- Assesses the use of technology in studying atmospheric phenomena:
  - Satellites
  - Predicting
  - Communicating information about conditions
  - Weather maps
  - Recording



## Related Books

*The Rainstick, A Fable*, Sandar Chisholm Robinson  
*Earthmaker's Tales: North American Indian Stories*  
*About Earth Happenings*, Gretchen Mayo

## Human Body System

- Analyzes how human body systems interact and function:
  - Musculoskeletal
  - Endocrine and Nervous
  - Excretory
  - Respiratory
  - Nervous System
  - Cardiovascular
  - Digestive
  - Circulatory
  - Reproductive
  - Immune
- Explains how organ structure is adapted to perform specific functions
- Models how an imbalance in homeostasis may result from a disruption in any human system

- Illustrates growth and development of the human organism
- Explains the effects of environmental influences on human embryo development and human health, including smoking, alcohol, drugs, and diet

## Heredity and Genetics

- Explains the significance of genes to individual characteristics
- Models how the sorting and recombination of parents' genetic material during reproduction produce potential variation among offspring
- Analyzes the role of probability in the study of heredity
  - Role of each parent in transfer of genetic traits
  - Analysis of pedigrees
- Summarizes the genetic transmittance of disease
- Evaluates evidence that human characteristics are a product of inheritance, environmental factors, and lifestyle choices

## Motion and Forces

- Demonstrates ways that simple machines can change force
- Analyze simple machines for mechanical advantage and efficiency
- Evaluates motion in terms of Newton's Laws
- Recognizes that an object's motion is always judged relative to some other object or point
- Describes quantities that characterize moving objects and their interactions within a system:
  - Time
  - Mass
  - Velocity
  - Acceleration
  - Distance
  - Force
  - Center of mass
- Investigates real world interactions of balanced and unbalanced forces

## Computer/Technology Skills

As a North Carolina requirement for graduation from high school, all students must pass the Computer Skills Test. The test is given to **eighth graders** in two parts: (1) a performance part administered on the computer; and (2) a multiple choice test.

*Working alone at the computer, the student will be given a performance test in three sections to demonstrate proficiency in:*

### Part 1: Desktop Publishing

- Combines Keyboarding and Word Processing/Editing
- Manipulates word processing documents
- Additional tasks: spelling, centering, moving text, i.e., cut and paste, inserting text, typing skills, line spacing, deleting text, manipulating font size and type, i.e., bold, italicize

### Part 2: Database Use

- Uses an existing database to answer questions
- Tests knowledge of various database functions, e.g., sorting, performing a search
- Additional task: addition of a field and appropriate records to a secondary database


### Part 3: Spreadsheet Use

- Uses existing spreadsheet to answer questions
- Additional tasks: modifies a spreadsheet by labeling a new column and adding records; creates a chart (graph)

The multiple choice test contains 70 questions on societal issues, ethics, care and operations, database and spreadsheet use, keyboarding techniques, word processing, desktop publishing, telecommunications and multimedia presentations.

If a student does not pass one or both portions of the test, s/he will have opportunities to receive remediation and retake the failed portion.

## Social Studies

- Identifies the origins, characteristics and influences of major groups of people in Africa and Asia
  - Describes similarities and differences among people of Africa and Asia
  - Assesses the role, status and social class of individuals and groups in Africa and Asia, past and present
  - Assesses the influence of major religions, ethical beliefs and aesthetic values on life in Africa and Asia
  - Analyzes economic, social and political situations which involve ethical and moral dilemmas
  - Locates major physical features and suggests the influence of their location on life in Africa and Asia
  - Describes the absolute and relative location of major land forms, bodies of water and natural resources within Africa and Asia
  - Assesses the significance of the physical and cultural characteristics of geographic regions within Africa and Asia
  - Defines region and identifies various regions within Africa and Asia
  - Compares the physical and cultural characteristics of regions within Africa and Asia
  - Distinguishes between developed and developing regions in Africa and Asia
  - Evaluates ways people in Africa and Asia use, modify and adapt to their physical environment
  - Explains how people of Africa and Asia have adapted to the physical environment
  - Analyzes causes and consequences of misuse of the physical environment and proposes alternatives
  - Analyzes the movement of people, goods and ideas within, between and among nations in Africa and Asia
  - Judges how changes in the movement of people, goods and ideas have affected ways of living in Africa and Asia
  - Evaluates the relationship of the nations of Africa and Asia to each other, to other world nations and to world affairs
  - Explains how Africa and Asia are organized politically
  - Analyzes how foreign policy is made and the means by which it is carried out
  - Examines how societies in Africa and Asia govern themselves
  - Describes how different types of governments in Africa and Asia carry out legislative, executive and judicial functions
  - Analyzes how societies in Africa and Asia deal with issues of justice
  - Describes how governments in Africa and Asia select leaders and establish laws
  - Compares forms of government in Africa and Asia and explains changes over time
  - Identifies economic resources found in Africa and Asia and explains the relationship between the location of natural resources and economic activities
  - Compares ways economic resources are used in African and Asian economies and analyzes the effects of unequal distribution
  - Describes the characteristics of economies in Africa and Asia and how they have changed over time
- 
- Analyzes economic relationships in Africa and Asia
  - Assesses causes and effects of increasing economic interdependence
  - Evaluates the influence of invention, discoveries and innovations on economic interdependence
  - Describes and analyzes changes which have occurred in ways of living in Africa and Asia
  - Judges the effect of change on the lives of people in Africa and Asia
  - Identifies people, symbols and events associated with the heritage of African and Asian societies
  - Traces an economic, political or social development through the history of Africa or Asia, judges its impact and predicts future changes



### Related Books

*Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World*, Jennifer Armstrong  
*Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes*, Eleanor Coerr  
*Shipwrecked*, Rhoda Blumberg  
*House of Wisdom*, Frances Parry Heide  
*Africa is Not a Country*, Margy Burns Knights  
*Farewell to Manzanar*, Jeanne Houston  
*Journey to Jo'burg: A South African Story*, Beverley Naidoo  
*My 52 Days by Camel*, Laurie Raskin  
*Traveling Man: The Journey of Ibn Battuta*, James Rumford  
*Homeless Bird*, Gloria Whelan

## Music

The study of music is cumulative and sequential to include learning from the previous grade level. Learning at this level is experiential and hands-on. Students at this level may choose from either continuing instrumental music (band or orchestra), or choral music. Within these courses the focus areas include:

- demonstrating appropriate expressive and technical vocal and instrumental practices.
- demonstrating pitch and rhythmic accuracy.
- reading and notating rhythmic and melodic patterns.
- identifying and applying traditional symbols and terms and using appropriate terminology.
- improvising, composing and arranging music.
- listening to, analyzing and evaluating music.
- developing understanding of music in relation to history, culture and other content areas.
- showing respect for the efforts of others.



### Related Books

*Shake, Rattle and Strum*, Sara Corbet  
*Go In and Out the Window: An Illustrated Song Book for Young People*, Dan Fox, editor  
*Songs for Survival: Songs and Chants from Tribal Peoples Around the World*, Nikki Siegen-Smith, compiler

## Art

The study of visual arts is cumulative and sequential to include learning introduced and emphasized at previous grade levels. The emphasis at this level is on:

- organizing and creating art.
- development of ideas over time.
- techniques and processes for working with a variety of materials.
- using a variety of media and techniques.
- the elements and principles of design.
- artistic solutions.
- interpreting original imagery.
- aesthetic diversity of various cultures.
- how art can meet its intended purpose.
- how art elements and design principles relate to all arts areas.
- the impact of future technology on the arts.
- art as a vocation or avocation.



### Related Books

*Art Attack: A Short Cultural History of the Avant-Garde*, Marc Aronson  
*Alphabet Art: Thirteen ABC's from Around the World*, Leonard Everett Fisher  
*A Short Walk Around the Pyramids and Through the World of Art*, Philip Isaacson  
*There Goes the Neighborhood*, Susan Rubin

## Foreign Language

Foreign Language at this level begins a sequential program that is an introduction to the study of a target language and its culture. Languages that are offered at most schools include French, Latin, and Spanish. The emphasis at this level is on:

- development of listening, speaking, reading and writing.
- communication through learned words and phrases dealing with familiar topics.
- grammar, integrated throughout.
- reading/writing activities through oral language.
- integration of other disciplines.
- introduction to culture and its products, perspectives and practices.
- comparison of culture and language to the students' own culture and language.
- awareness of the importance of learning another language and culture.

## Career and Technical Education In 7th and 8th Grades

Career and Technical Education in the middle school, though exploratory in nature, provides students with opportunities to use "real world" technology and experience situations that offer them insight and understanding of a variety of challenging, high-paying careers. Three semester-long courses are available to students to assist them in their career/educational decision-making and planning:

**Exploring Business and Marketing**, using computer integrated activities, provides students opportunities to create interactive multimedia presentations, electronic journals and develop computer skills while exploring careers in marketing, business law, economics and personal finance, accounting, international business, management and entrepreneurship.

**Exploring Life Skills** offers opportunities to students to explore and apply life management skills to everyday life while performing tasks related to child care, nutrition and wellness, consumer education and practices, resource management, food production and services, hospitality and tourism, and recreation.

**Exploring Technology Systems** features computer integrated activities enabling students to experience the impact technology has made on careers and personal lives. Problem solving, team decision making, information gathering and safety are some of the skills students develop while exploring careers related to automation, robotics, graphic design, video production, energy, transportation, aerospace, computer assisted drafting and engineering.



## Character Traits

Building good character is an important part of every child's education and is a joint responsibility of home and school. In the Guilford County Schools, promoting ethical standards is an integral part of the learning process. The eight cornerstones of good character which parents and teachers are asked to teach and model are as follows:

### Respect

- Showing high regard for self, other people, property and authority
- Understanding that all people have value
- Responding sensitively to the ideas of others without dismissing or degrading them

### Caring-Compassion

- Treating others with compassion, generosity and friendship, recognizing that everyone feels hurt, confused and angry from time- to-time
- Seeking understanding and reconciliation with other members of a community in conflict

### Responsibility

- Being dependable
- Carrying out obligations and having a sense of duty to fulfill tasks one has accepted
- Being accountable

### Courage

- Attempting difficult things that are worthwhile
- Doing the right thing even when others do not
- Following your conscience rather than the crowd

## Integrity

- Carrying out your responsibilities without claiming credit for someone else's work
- Willing to acknowledge wrongdoing
- Being truthful and trustworthy

## Determination

- Having perseverance and the inner strength to pursue goals
- Completing individual assignments and supporting others in their work

## Self-Discipline

- Demonstrating hard work and commitment
- Improving yourself and restraining from inappropriate behavior
- Doing your best always

## Giving

- Discovering that one of life's greatest satisfactions comes from giving to others
- Sharing through service
- Responding to the needs of others, without expectation of reward

## Healthful Living Education

The students will be aware of the important health risks for their age group and be able to appraise their own health status, health behavior and potential for health risks. The students will employ a variety of structured thinking processes to solve various health-related problems and make health-related decisions.

The students will be able to enact non-violent conflict resolution strategies, exhibit behaviors productive to group functioning, define the rights of individuals in relationships and communicate feelings and expectations clearly.

The students will be able to protect themselves from health risks arising from fire, substance abuse, insufficient activity and water recreational activities, and they will recognize the value of abstaining from sexual intercourse until marriage. Additionally, students will be able to manage stress, comprehend the role of personal responsibility in minimizing health risks and develop plans to manage health-related behaviors and habits.

The students will know the principles of exercise and diet that contribute to the development of personal fitness. The students should be very comfortable in all aspects of heart rate monitoring (knows his/her resting heart rate, target heart rate, recovery rate), be able to demonstrate FIT Guidelines and develop sound exercise practices.

The students will be able to demonstrate the ability to set one's own goals, develop an awareness and respect of cultural diversity through participation in physical activities, understand and apply basic principles of training and develop abilities to function in group activities.



The students will be able to perform a wide variety of body management skills and recreational dances (square dance, international folk dance and social dance).

The students will be able to perform the skills necessary for participation in a variety of small-sided team, dual and individual lifetime activities. Students will engage in physical activities that provide for challenge, problem-solving and decision-making, appropriate risk-taking choices, fair play and sportsmanship behaviors.



### Related Books

*Hoops with Swoopes*, Susan Kuklin  
*To the Top of Everest*, Laurie Skreslet