



VISTA VERDE CHALLENGE PROGRAM



What is the “Challenge Program?”

VISTA VERDE offers differentiated curricular choices to identified GATE and high achieving students. The instructional program is designed to challenge students through acceleration, complexity, depth, creativity, variety, and higher level critical thinking

What does it look like in fourth grade?

Fourth grade differentiates curriculum in all content areas. In reading, the Challenge program offers students the opportunity to develop their synthesis and inferential skills in reading. Challenge students choose an activity from the “Challenge Handbook” and complete enrichment activities in the “Advanced RTI” group. The students also participate in shared inquiry discussions while reading the Jr. Great book series. These activities add depth and complexity to the topics discussed in the textbook. During the novel studies, the Challenge students complete an individual enrichment activity that correlates with the theme of the novel (e.g. reading and comparing The Lone Woman of Ghalas-at to Island of the Blue Dolphins). They read novels at an accelerated rate and study novels in addition to the basic fourth grade curriculum. Challenge students are grouped homogeneously to complete “Book Club” assignments and have higher level discussions. They are also required to complete “Moderate and Challenge” artifacts rather than “Simple” ones.

Challenge assignments in math require critical thinking and problem solving. All students are assessed prior to beginning a chapter. This assessment determines which differentiated assignments they will complete. Intermittently, the students participate in a “Challenge Group” lesson to reinforce math concepts and dive deeper into the concepts of the chapter.

In writing, Challenge students are expected to produce a higher-caliber piece with above-level word choice and sentence fluency. In addition, they are expected to study the “Challenge Words” each week in spelling. Fourth and fifth graders are invited to attend “Writing Club” once a week to develop writer’s craft and voice in their writing. Vista Verde fourth graders continue to have some of the highest CST writing scores in the district.

How do I decide if the Challenge Program is the right place for my child?

- Contact your child’s teacher
- Talk to a 4th grade teacher
- Talk to your child



Does the Challenge Program Continue in Middle School?

The challenge program exists K-8. Vista Verde students are in a unique position to participate in pre-algebra in 6th grade with a credentialed single-subject teacher. In addition, all middle school core subject areas offer Challenge assignments throughout the year. In high school, Vista Verde alumni have higher GPAs and are more often involved in leadership than their peers. Talk to your child’s teacher to find out more!