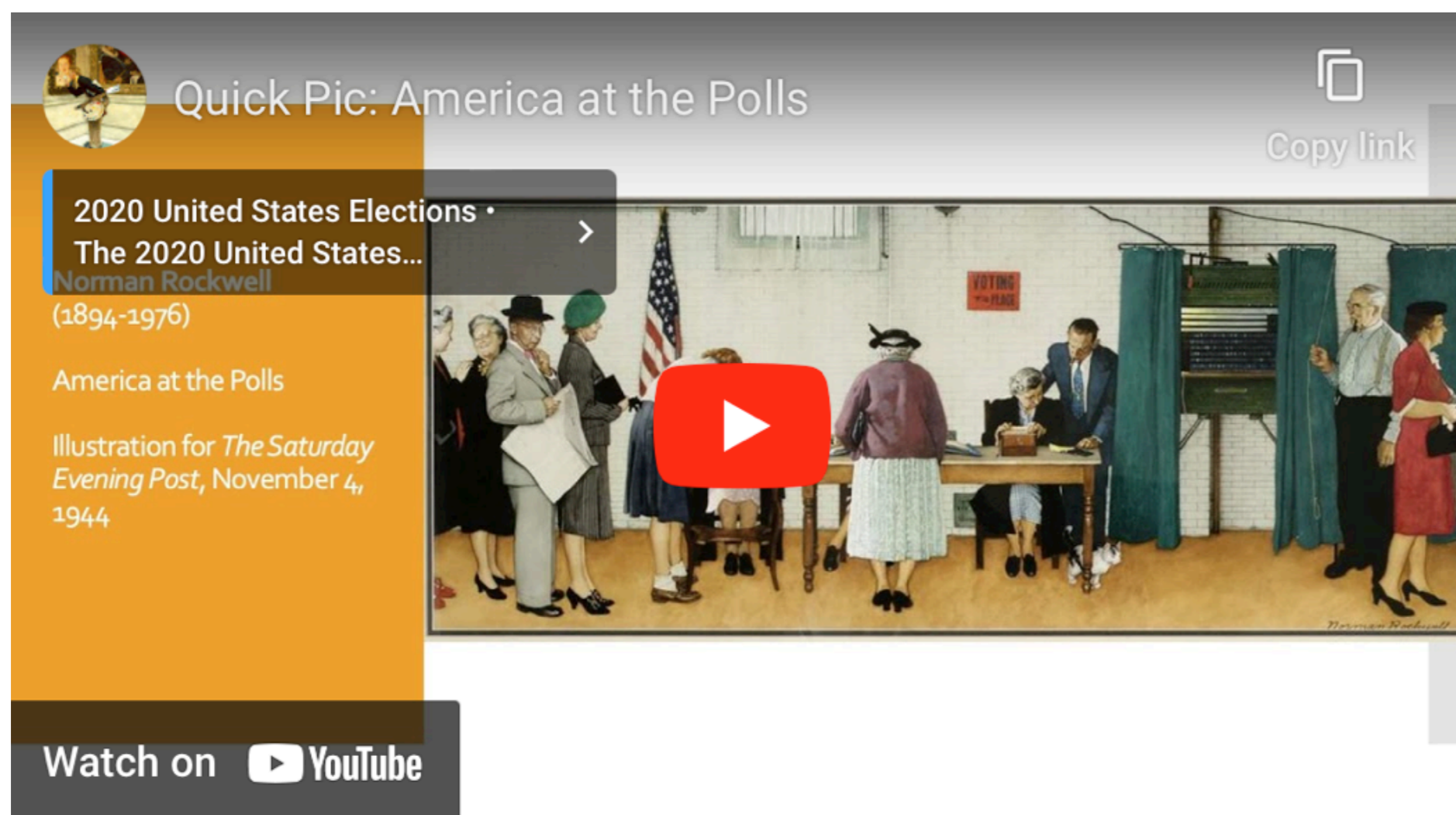


## Quick Pics: America at the Polls – A Sequential Story

### America at the Polls – A Sequential Story,(1944)



#### GRADE

K-6

#### THEME

Quick Pics

#### LENGTH

Each Quick Pic activity is about 5-10 minutes in duration, with each being taught one image per day over a week.

#### DISCIPLINE

Social Studies, Language Arts: Speaking and Listening, Art

**VOCABULARY** Election, Vote, Sequence, Decision, Conscience

#### Big Idea

Every voter has a story to tell about how they made their decisions. Voters learn about issues and about candidates, they talk with family, friends, and sometimes co-workers. They read, watch news and social media. Ultimately each voter makes their own decision based on their conscience. Rockwell's images tell a story of one voter, Junius Wimple, and he invites us to reflect on how important and personal voting is.

Rockwell's *America at the Polls* images tell a sequential story like many comics do. This was unusual for Norman Rockwell.

#### Notice and Wonder:

- Find the voter, Junius Wimple, in each image.
- Who does Junius speak with about his vote?
- What do these conversations look like? Are they polite? Are the characters trying to convince one another about different opinions? How do you know? What media was available in 1944? How did Junius receive his news?
- Notice the newspaper in each image. In 1944 Americans received much of their news via printed newspapers. How does the way the newspaper appears in each image help tell the story of how Junius is making his decision? What do the images about his interactions with others tell about how he worked on making a decision?
- What is your story about what appears to be happening in each image?
- What details do you notice about clothing, shoes, pets in this story? What do these details tell you about what is the same and what is different between 1944 and now?

#### Fun Facts:

At the polling place, which could be a school gymnasium, we see Junius waiting in line and checking in. What do you think the wooden filing box is on the table? This was a time before computers. All the townspeople were listed by name and address on paper cards which were kept updated by town officials. Townspeople are checking in to be counted and so they can make their one vote. Town officials are checking off names to be sure the election is secure and each citizen has one vote.

- We see the voting booth with a green curtain. We see observers. In the booth Junius is alone with his conscience.
- In the final image we see him celebrating. It appears his person won!

### Additional Background:

The 1944 United States presidential election was the 40th quadrennial presidential election. It was held on Tuesday, November 7, 1944. The election took place during World War II. Incumbent Democratic President Franklin D. Roosevelt defeated Republican Thomas E. Dewey to win an unprecedented fourth term. Until 1996, this would be the last time in which an incumbent Democratic president would win reelection after serving a full term in office.

In 1944, Norman Rockwell traveled to Cedar Rapids, Iowa to paint the cover illustration for the election-eve cover of *The Saturday Evening Post*. He chose Cedar Rapids as an example of every town in America. He scoured the town for local citizens to be the models for his illustrations. With the help of a photographer and offering five dollars to citizens to pose as models he readily found his cast of characters.

All of the citizens in the images are recognizable as Cedar Rapidsians and the star of this series was discovered at Cleveland Elementary School where he worked as a janitor. Edward Bernstorff was cast as the lead voter struggling to make his decision in the presidential campaign between Franklin Roosevelt and Thomas Dewey. The story in the magazine described Bernstorff as “Junius P. Wimple”, an everyman character trying to make the educated decision for America’s president. Wimple, holding the *Cedar Rapids Gazette* in the images throughout the article, takes part in the democratic process and we follow him as he makes his own decision.

### What to do:

Ask family members about their voting stories. Who did they talk with and what did they read to help them decide their precious vote? Where did they vote? What would our current year picture of voting story in your city or town look like? Did people you know wait in line or vote by mail?

## Image Resources



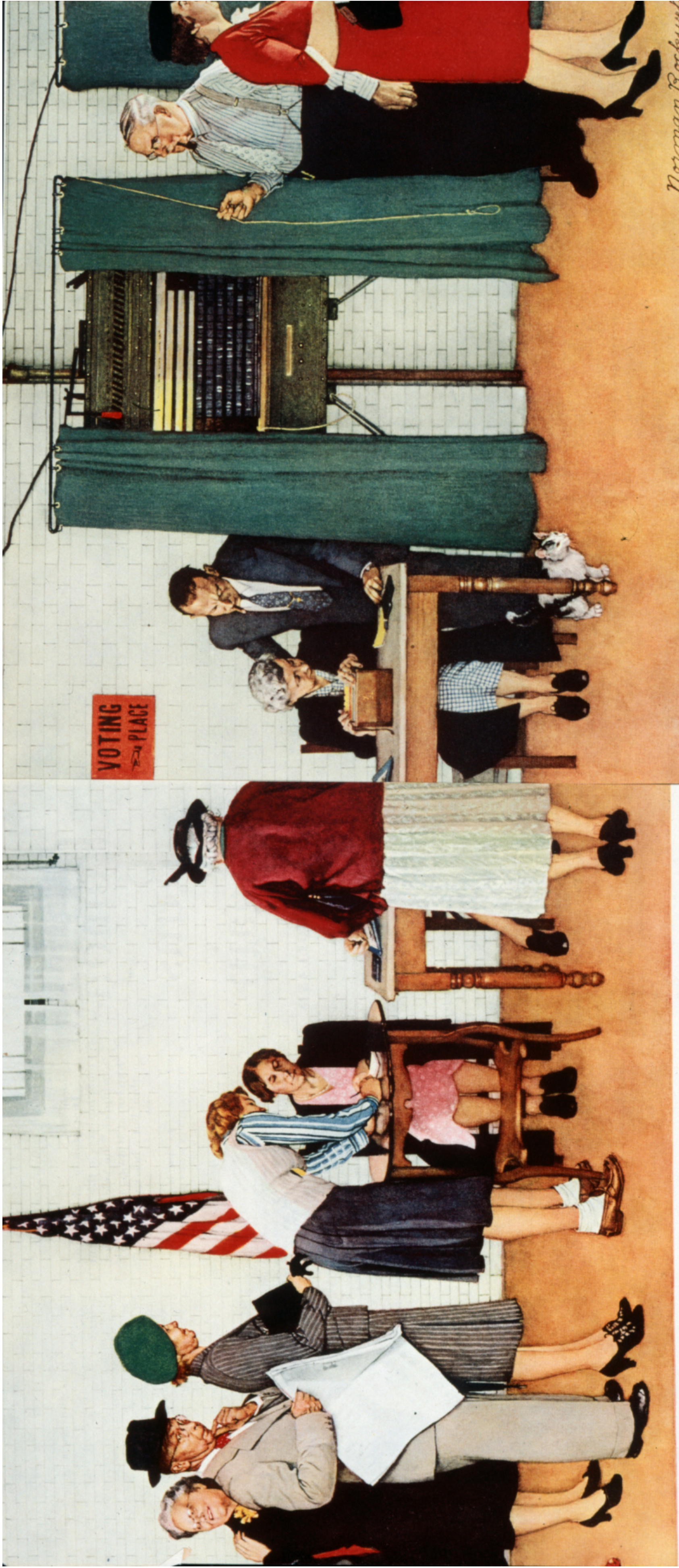
Norman Rockwell (1894 – 1978)

*America at the Polls*, 1944

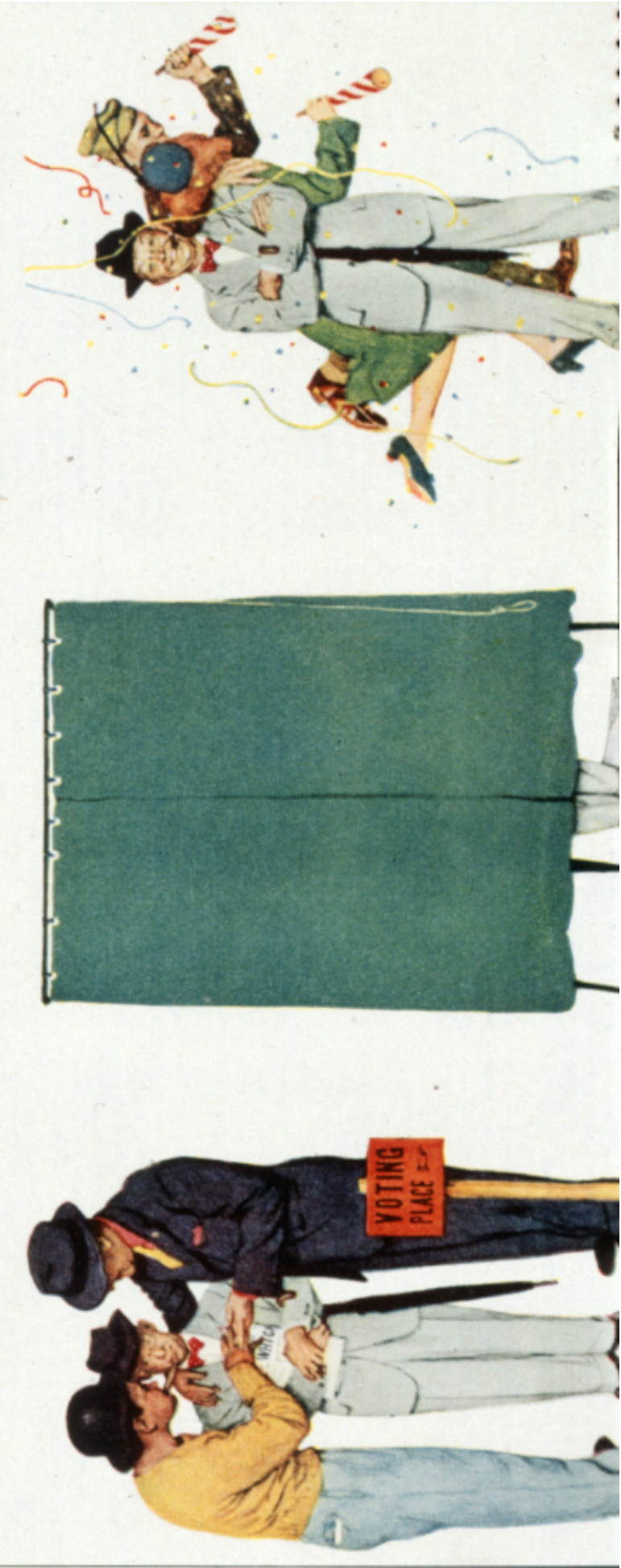
Oil on canvas

Illustration for *The Saturday Evening Post*, November 4, 1944

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Norman Rockwell



**NORMAN ROCKWELL PAINTS**

**AMERICA AT THE POLLS**

**I**T WOULD be hard to name anything more thoroughly American than the grand and glorious event which takes place on a certain Tuesday of every fourth November. To portray this national phenomenon, to capture its traditional spirit, we could think of no living artist better equipped with native understanding than Norman Rockwell.

In his search for a truly representative background, Rockwell went straight to the heart of America; specifically, to Cedar Rapids, Iowa. By the time his pictorial preview was completed, he had created a new character: The human, likable citizen who adorns these pages and the cover of this Post. We have christened him Junius P. Wimple. You will, we hope, see more of him in Posts to come.

It was the picture in the lower right-hand corner that gave the Post editors a bright idea. Rockwell, we reasoned, always knows his characters through and through. As Wimple's creator, he knows how Wimple thinks, feels—and votes. Therefore, why not trick the artist into revealing Wimple's secret, and thus learn the outcome of the election before it takes place? So we wired Rockwell: "Which one is Wimple voting for?" Promptly, the guileless artist answered by wire, collect: "For the winner."

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# Standards:

This curriculum meets the standards listed below. Look for more details on these standards please visit: [ELA](#) and [Math Standards](#), [Social Studies Standards](#), [Visual Arts Standards](#).

## Applied Standards

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.1

Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.2

Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.3

Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.4

Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.5

Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.6

Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.1

Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2

Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.3

Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.4

Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.5

Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.6

Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.