

# The American School in London

## Grade 2: Semester 1 Curriculum Guide

By the end of the first reporting period, these are the ideas, concepts, and skills your child will have learned. We acknowledge that all children learn at different paces, and that it takes the students different lengths of time to master skills and concepts. Your child's teacher will update you on their initial social, emotional, and academic progress at October conferences and provide a more formal report card in February.

### Approaches to Learning

In the area of social behavior and work habits, the students learn to be members of a cooperative classroom community using the structures of the Responsive Classroom. Through a daily morning meeting and sharing, students learn the routines and expectations for behavior. We encourage students to continuously be aware of how their actions and words affect others and model it throughout the day. As students continue to grow and develop, both responsibility and independence are expected to increase throughout the year.

### Reading

The students are instructed in reading in a variety of ways including guided reading groups with leveled texts, independent reading, buddy reading, and whole group reading activities. Students are guided through a process of selecting books at their independent level to ensure comprehension, enjoyment, and good habits. By mid-year, we would expect most students to be reading books between the purple and green bands in the LS Library, independently reading between Fountas and Pinnell levels K-L.

### Writing

Using the Writer's Workshop model, students engage in the process of planning, drafting, revising, editing, publishing, and sharing their work. In the first half of the year students focus on personal narratives and opinion writing, along with writing across curricular subjects. Whole class mini-lessons teach students specific writing strategies, such as strong leads, dialogue, and correct usage of punctuation. Student/teacher conferences provide an opportunity for more individualized instruction based on students' needs. Word study is addressed in a variety of ways including a focus on high frequency words, spelling patterns, and spelling strategies specific to students' own writing.

### Speaking and Listening

Students in Grade 2 learn to be respectful, polite listeners to their peers and adults by using manners and following directions. Starting with a daily morning meeting, students learn to respond appropriately to the ideas of others, contribute to classroom discussions by waiting their turn, and welcome feedback by allowing others to ask questions about their thoughts or ideas. As speakers, students rehearse what they want to say in their mind before speaking, present relevant information, learn to articulate their words in a logical sequence, and pay attention to their volume. It is important for Grade 2 students to make eye contact and feel confident speaking to others.

## Math

The Grade 2 math curriculum is based on the Common Core State Standards to develop students' conceptual understanding of key ideas and mathematical reasoning. Students approach problem solving from a variety of perspectives and learn that solutions may be reached by using different strategies, such as doubles, near doubles, counting on, and complements of 10. The value of US coins is learned through an exploration of grouping and skip counting patterns. This semester, students deepen their understanding of addition, subtraction, and place value. They also use a strategy-based approach to build math fact fluency and further their exploration of data. Playing math games and using manipulatives are an integral part of the curriculum, designed to reinforce concepts and skills.

## Social Studies

Students in Grade 2 start the year by learning about their classroom community. They also spend a significant amount of time exploring and sharing the different facets of their identity. Building on the concept of identity, students learn to respect the diversity of others. Diversity is explored by getting to know each other's interests and family culture. Students build upon these concepts as they continue exploring the wider community of our school, neighborhoods, and London.

## Science

The first science topic for Grade 2 is Matter and Materials. Students plan investigations and analyze data about properties to show which are best suited for particular purposes. From observations, evidence-based arguments are developed to determine cause and effect for changes due to heating and cooling. Students will also be able to demonstrate that objects made of small parts can be disassembled and made into new objects.

## Art

Grade 2 students explore a variety of art techniques, art mediums and purposes in creating art through their own creative expression and through the study of artists. They learn how Line and colors can be used for a variety of art making ideas, creating designs that utilize expressive lines and repeated shapes. Students are introduced to monochromatic work to challenge their creativity and imagination to later add other elements to enhance artistic compositions. Students attend two, 50-minute classes every eight days.

## Music

Grade 2 students continue to develop their singing skills, their understanding of musical notation and their enjoyment of music as a means of self-expression. Movement and dance opportunities are an important part of lessons. Through practice, students begin to create melodies and use a reduced staff to compose on a glockenspiel and they notate their creations. We focus on repeated notes, steps, skips, and jumps. Students learn correct mallet technique when playing xylophones, and they also develop careful ringing technique on hand chimes as they accompany their own singing. Music literacy skills are further developed as the children begin to read from hand chime scores. Students attend three, half hour lessons every eight days.

## PE

The Grade 2 program is designed to further develop basic movement patterns for more complex physical activities. Students participate in activities that develop their locomotor and cooperative skills. These activities include team and partner games involving running, skipping, jumping and galloping. As the semester progresses, students are introduced to multi-skilled activities that include throwing and catching, kicking, striking, and racket sports. Fun games are incorporated throughout the year to introduce ideas of health and sportsmanship in a positive environment. Flexibility, agility and upper body strength are developed through dance and gymnastics activities where students create their own sequences in collaborative groups. In the aquatics unit, students learn how to be safe in water, gain more confidence in deep water and improve their swimming technique during a six week block in either the first or second semester. Students attend 40-minute classes every other day.

## Spanish

Grade 2 students continue to develop their understanding and use of Spanish through the exposure to authentic language and the culture of the Spanish speaking world. Students participate in activities involving movement, music, manipulatives and games where instruction is given in Spanish. Both listening and speaking skills are put at the center of the learning, with language prompts getting more complex and introducing pronunciation through phonics. The program covers basic vocabulary for greetings, feelings, numbers, colors, school, family, rooms in the house, food, body parts, clothes and animals. Students attend three, half hour lessons every eight days.