

FIRST GRADE

Reading and Language Arts

The First Grade reading and language arts program is based on a balanced literacy approach in which children are immersed in reading, writing, and oral language activities. Reading instruction occurs through read-alouds, shared reading, guided reading, and independent reading. The teachers meet frequently with each child for one-on-one reading conferences, and they use their observations in conjunction with the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System to determine and carefully track the students' instructional and independent reading levels over the course of the year. Students learn foundational skills for reading, writing, and spelling through the Wilson Foundations program. Grammar skills and writing mechanics are taught in First Grade, and students begin their day by practicing grammar skills in their Correct the Sentence Daily Journals. The children learn phonics and spelling patterns through explicit instruction, and there is a spelling list given out each week. In First Grade, the students participate in a writing workshop using the units of study developed by the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project. As children learn spelling and grammar skills, they are able to apply their learning to their written work.

DURING THE YEAR, STUDENTS WILL:

- Develop decoding and word analysis skills and read texts at their independent and instructional reading levels in order to practice and hone these skills

- Read for meaning and identify story elements such as characters, setting, problem, and solution
- Use the writing process to compose written work in a variety of genres such as personal narrative, informational writing, opinion writing, and poetry

Math

The heart of the First Grade math program includes hands-on exploration, discussion, and discovery. The Scott-Foresman Addison Wesley mathematics curriculum is used as the foundation of the program. The teachers present a daily math concept to the entire class for general understanding and consistency in vocabulary. Students are then placed into small groups reflecting individual skill levels. Using manipulatives, modeling, and explicit instruction, concepts are



reinforced and students have the opportunity for guided practice through activities, games, and extensions. Math instruction is skillfully differentiated so that each child is engaged and challenged. Student progress is assessed over the course of the year through ongoing classroom observation, fact quizzes, and unit assessments.

Based on the students performance on the math assessment at the beginning of the year, students may be placed in the next grade level of math.

DURING THE YEAR, STUDENTS WILL LEARN SKILLS SUCH AS:

- Basic addition and subtraction facts up to 20 through repeated practice
- Counting and performing computations with coins
- Telling time to the hour and half hour
- Establishing an understanding of measurement
- Solving word problems using multiple strategies

Science

The science curriculum is aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), and the children engage in the work of scientists as they ask ques-

tions, make observations, and participate in laboratory experiments. The year culminates with a long-term, interdisciplinary study of endangered species. The children learn about this topic through activities that weave scientific concepts into music, art, reading, research, writing, technology, community service, and performance skills. Over the course of the year, the curriculum includes the following units of study in life science, physical science, and earth science: Discovering Animals, Light and Sound Waves, Sky Watchers, and Endangered Species.

DURING THE YEAR, STUDENTS WILL:

- Learn scientific concepts through hands-on investigations, data collection and analysis, discussions, non-fiction reading, and writing
- Research an endangered species, create Power Point slides with an illustration and important information about each animal, and participate in an Endangered Species Presentation that includes an oral presentation by each student, choral recitation of original poetry, headpiece design and creation, a community service project, and songs presented as a group

Social Studies

The goal of the First Grade social studies curriculum is to help children

to respect and understand themselves and others and identify collectively as a class community. The program teaches children concepts and skills through discussion, literature, student magazines such as *Time for Kids*, news articles, charts, posters, videos, websites, and internet research both in the computer lab and on iPads in the classroom.



DURING THE YEAR, STUDENTS WILL:

- Focus on environmental awareness and raise money for the Nature Conservancy's Adopt an Acre and Adopt a Reef programs by recycling bottles and cans and selling raffle tickets for collaborative artwork
- Participate in a holiday drive for a local animal shelter
- Learn about national holidays, and holidays and customs celebrated by classmates
- Develop an awareness of current events through weekly reading and discussion

World Languages (Spanish)

World language study in the First Grade builds upon the basic Spanish language foundation the students have developed in previous years. Classes meet two days per week, and the students develop their vocabulary, increase their comprehension skills, and gain confidence in their ability to speak Spanish through interactive games, songs, and collaborative activities.

