

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

Grade 2 students are instructed in reading in a variety of ways including guided reading groups with leveled texts, independent reading, partner 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. We start the semester by supporting students to build reading focus and stamina. Students also analyze habits of fluent readers, and begin to demonstrate those same habits which include using strategies to solve tricky words and build fluency, actively thinking as a reader and exploring the intention and craft of authors.

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, 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 and develops 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, while exploring and practicing various models to represent their mathematical thinking. 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.

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 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 various 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 have two, 50-minute art lessons every eight days.

Music

Grade 2 students continue to develop their understanding of musical notation and their enjoyment of music as a means of self-expression. Body percussion helps to develop a strong rhythmic sense. Through practice, students begin to create rhythmic patterns and melodies. They compose using a glockenspiel, and they notate their creations. We focus on repeated notes, steps, skips, and jumps. Students also develop careful ringing technique on hand chimes. Music literacy skills are further developed as the children begin to follow hand chime scores. Students have three, 30-minute 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, including team and partner games involving running, skipping, jumping and galloping. As the semester progresses, students are introduced to manipulative skills like 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 alone and in collaborative groups. In the aquatics unit, students learn how to be safe and confident in deep water by developing their floating, treading, and swim skills. Students attend 40-minute classes every other day.

Spanish

Grade 2 students continue to develop their understanding and use of Spanish through exposure to authentic language and the culture of the Spanish speaking world. Students listen to music and read alouds, participate in games where instruction is given in Spanish and interact with each other using high frequency words and rehearsed language structures. Both listening and speaking skills are put at the center of the learning, with language prompts getting more complex and introducing pronunciation through phonics. This semester we will cover basic vocabulary for greetings, feelings, numbers, colors, school, family, weather, food, body parts, animals and clothes. Students have three, 30-minute lessons every eight days.