

The American School in London

Grade 2: Semester 2 Curriculum Guide

By the end of the second 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.

Approaches to Learning

Grade 2 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, buddy reading and whole group reading activities. They grow their understanding of fictional characters by noticing actions and reactions to develop ideas and opinions about their characters' traits. Additionally, by examining the content, structure and features of informational texts, Grade 2 readers grow their knowledge in a variety of content areas. Students are guided through a process of selecting books at their independent level to ensure comprehension, enjoyment and good habits. Students in Grade 2 become more independent as readers and are expected to contribute to a book group setting in Semester 2.

Writing

Using the Writer's Workshop model, students are exposed to a variety of writing genres, such as opinion and informational writing. Students are led through a process of planning, drafting, revising, editing and publishing their work. Whole class mini-lessons teach students specific writing strategies, such as how to choose a topic and provide supporting statements. Students communicate using clear organization, including transition words. Students write informational texts connected to our science unit. Student/teacher conferences provide an opportunity for more individualized instruction based on the student's needs. Spelling instruction is addressed in a variety of ways, including a focus on high frequency trick words, spelling patterns, and spelling strategies specific to their own writing.

Speaking and Listening

Students in Grade 2 learn to be respectful, polite listeners to their peers and adults. Starting with a daily morning meeting, students learn to respond appropriately to ideas shared, 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 learn to articulate their words, pay attention to their volume, and rehearse what they want to say in their mind before speaking. It is important for Grade 2 students to make eye contact, speak clearly, feel confident speaking to others, and practice active listening.

Math

The Grade 2 math curriculum is aligned to the Common Core State Standards, with an emphasis on sense making, reasoning and problem solving. We encourage flexibility in thinking and encourage students to approach problem solving from a variety of perspectives. Playing math games and the use of manipulatives and models to record and share ideas are an integral part of the curriculum, designed to reinforce concepts and skills. This semester, students deepen their understanding of place value and strategies and models for the addition and subtraction of numbers within 1,000, while developing automaticity of facts within 20. Students will deepen their understanding of two dimensional figures by describing the unique attributes of shapes and by decomposing shapes into fractional parts. Students will learn to tell time to the nearest five minutes.

Social Studies

This semester, students continue to build upon the concept of identity by exploring the wider community of our neighborhoods and London. Using the Lower School model of inquiry, students consider the diversity of the city of London. Students interpret data from a variety of models and develop and conduct interviews to gain new information.

Science

The second science topic for Grade 2 is Animal Adventures. This unit helps students develop a sense of wonder for biodiversity. Students gain practical experience in identifying animals and sorting them into scientific groups. They apply their new knowledge in an engineering design challenge. The unit introduces the foundational concepts of habitat and species.

Spanish

This semester, Grade 2 students will continue to work on securing their listening skills and using Spanish to share about their identities. We will also use the target language to make a presentation about an animal and their habitat in Spanish. Some of the vocabulary words we will be using include animals, habitats, plants, and high frequency adjectives and verbs.

Music

In the second semester, Grade 2 students continue to sing, play, move and create in music classes. They develop their notation skills using a reduced staff for melodic work and more conventional notation for rhythmic work. Starting with short poems, they create their own melodies before moving to percussion instruments. After the introduction of hand chimes last semester, the students begin to read from a large scale score as they develop their ringing technique in the second half of the year. Students continue to learn a wide variety of songs and dances from different countries in several languages. They learn about form, dynamics, melody, beat and rhythm while creating dance moves to fit different songs. They become more confident singing and practicing rounds in an ensemble.

PE

In the second semester, students engage in group activities that help them learn to organize tasks, communicate their ideas, and support classmates to achieve a common goal. They continue to develop their movement skills by participating in a final swim unit, as well as land-based units covering dance, jump rope, chasing and fleeing games, invasion games using hands and feet, and striking and fielding activities. Students learn to apply game strategies while developing their manipulative skills during competitive and collaborative activities in the team games units, and acquire greater body awareness and control through dances and jump-roping activities. The final swim unit is focused on helping students improve their endurance in the pool, as well as introducing throwing, catching, and balancing activities in the water.

Art

This semester, Grade 2 students continue to explore the elements of art exploring a variety of techniques, art media and purposes through the study of various contemporary artists including David Hockney and Amy Sherald among others. With an emphasis on painting, the students will create art about events in their home or community life, exploring concepts such as warm and cool colors, and comparing and contrasting cultural uses in their pieces. They will design a variety of personal pieces including their own portfolio. Students will continue to use their sketchbooks to explore materials and make their own choice-based art while engaging in free enquiry.