



Learning Across the Year

● First Grade ●

Great Falls Public Schools is committed to...

Vision: All kids engaged in learning today...for life tomorrow

Mission: We successfully educate students to navigate their future.

This document provides a broad overview of what your child will be learning in each of the content areas. For a more detailed look at the complete curriculum for first grade, go to: www.gfps.k12.mt.us



Reading

In first grade, students apply concepts of print, phonological and phonemic awareness, oral language skills, and phonics. They continue to expand their reading vocabulary and demonstrate comprehension by responding to reading in a variety of ways. Students ask and answer questions about their reading, explore differences between different texts and use text features to help them make sense of what they read. Students choose and read books for pleasure. First grade units include Fables & Stories, The Human Body, Different Lands, Similar Stories, Early World Civilizations, Early American Civilizations, Astronomy, The History of the Earth, Animals & Habitats, Fairy Tales, A New Nation: American Independence, and Frontier Explorers.

Writing

In first grade, students write independently and share in writing projects. These focus on giving an opinion, telling a story or conveying information. The conventions of punctuation, directionality, spacing, and letter formation help writing become more clear.

Speaking and Listening

In first grade, students learn to take part in class discussions by listening to others and taking turns when speaking. They are encouraged to ask questions and communicate clearly to express thoughts, feelings and ideas. First graders can describe people, places and events and can speak in complete sentences.

Handwriting

First graders learn to print with an emphasis on strokes, posture, and grip, etc.) First graders review and refine the letter formation they learned in kindergarten. Students engage in functional writing practice that leads to printing mastery.

Language

Students in first grade begin to understand and correctly use capitalization and punctuation and are encouraged to use correct grammar when reading, writing and speaking.

Math

First graders start to develop critical concepts of ones and tens. An understanding of how ones and tens relate to each other allows students to begin adding and subtracting two-digit numbers. Understanding that addition and subtraction undo each other is an important part of learning to use the operations efficiently and accurately. Students expand their knowledge of two- and three-dimensional geometric figures by sorting, comparing and contrasting them.

Science

Children learn to observe, ask questions, classify and take notes while conducting experiments while exploring the units: Animals, Light & Shadows, Sky Patterns, and Plants.



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Social Studies

First graders develop social skills through experiences centered around the topics: Classroom Jobs, All About Me, Families, Safety Rules, Seasons, Holidays, Wants and Needs, Elections, Symbols of Our Country, World Awareness, Around Us, and Maps and Globes.

Music

First graders listen, respond to and present music with guidance. They learn basic music symbols for notes, terms, and signs. They also learn to identify patterns, rhythms and steady beat in music.

Physical Education/Health Enhancement

Students learn body and space awareness, manipulative and fine motor skills, endurance and flexibility in PE. Other topics covered include nutrition, safety and fitness.

Technology

Students will explore and use a variety of digital tools to create group projects and to communicate ideas.

Art

First graders are encouraged to develop individual creativity through visual means. Students learn to use art materials, create works of art, respond to and analyze works of art and understand art influences.

Counseling

Students acquire personal skills to support and improve their education by learning how to follow directions, learn from mistakes, make friends, take turns, follow safety rules, etc. They also relate how school is important to their lives.

Library

Students learn effective and efficient ways to access information. They are encouraged to access and read information and literature for learning and enjoyment. The library curriculum supports concepts of print by distinguishing words and sentences in books.

How to Help Your Child Learn at Home

Try to develop a routine where your child sits in a quiet place for 15 to 30 minutes daily to complete homework or reading. Sitting with your child will allow you the opportunity to see what he/she is learning. You will be the first to know if your child needs help with specific topics.

- Read with your child every day. Talk to your child about the reading. Help him or her sound out difficult words. Have him/her retell the story, tell his/her favorite part and describe what type of text it is and how he/she knows.
- Pick a “word of the day” each day starting with a different letter. Have your child write the word and look for other things beginning with the same letter.
- Visit the library with your child each week. Have your child get his or her own library card to help foster a love for reading.
- When cooking or cleaning or doing other routine chores, look for opportunities to discuss real-life math problems. “How many items do we need to put away? How many more items are on the floor than in the basket? How many more eggs do I need to put in? How do you know?”
- Play the “I’m thinking of a number game.” Give them clues until they guess the correct number.
- Encourage your child to tell you about his or her day at school. Encourage them to elaborate to encourage the use of vocabulary. Don’t settle for one word answers. Ask specific questions or use the phrase “Tell me more.”

