

Grade 1: 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 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

Social skills and emotional development are essential for success. Grade 1 students create classroom agreements that support being respectful, responsible, and safe. Children develop new friendships, resolve conflicts constructively, and interact cooperatively with peers and appropriately with adults. Children are encouraged to be attentive listeners, participate in class discussions, and make relevant responses.

Reading

Grade 1 uses the building blocks of phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension to support reading and writing development. Grade 1 students acquire and apply literacy skills through a balance of small group guided reading lessons, shared reading experiences, and independent reading of just-right books. This multisensory approach addresses the foundational skills needed for successful readers and spellers. Children are encouraged to read fiction and nonfiction texts with fluency, expression, accuracy, and increased comprehension. As the first grade year progresses, students increase their reading stamina and further develop their reading strategies. Children develop a love of reading by taking home books daily to build the home-school connection.

Writing

Our writing approach emphasizes creativity, building confidence in writing, and developing fluency. Children are given the opportunity to write, revise, edit, publish, and share both fiction and nonfiction pieces. We emphasize the connection between writing and phonological awareness through the systematic and explicit study of letters, sounds, and words. Developmentally appropriate word study is explored through games, stations, and small group work. This practice enables children to take risks in spelling. Children learn to use spelling resources to support independence. Children develop their handwriting skills by practicing correct letter formation and spacing.

Speaking and Listening

In Grade 1, we expect our students to learn, practice, and model effective communication skills. The students are given many opportunities to express their ideas, new understandings, and feelings. Active listening and speaking are encouraged every day.

Math

The Grade 1 math curriculum is based on the Common Core State Standards and develops students' conceptual understanding of key ideas and mathematical reasoning and problem-solving skills. This semester, students deepen their understanding of numbers and data. They also further their exploration of operations, computation, and measurement. Students play games individually and in cooperative groups and use manipulatives to solidify their conceptual understanding. They are encouraged to use a wide variety of tools and strategies to solve problems and explain their thinking.

Social Studies

Grade 1 students develop an understanding of their community and the world around them. In social studies, students share about themselves and learn about others in order to build a strong, cohesive classroom and school community. The students celebrate diversity and learn accurate language for human differences through various activities. They practice self-awareness, confidence, family pride, and positive social identities. Grade 1 students also learn conflict resolution strategies including understanding the size of a problem, practicing "I statements" and talking it out.

Science

In science, Grade 1 students participate in inquiry-based projects related to light and sound. Emphasis is placed on asking questions to plan and conduct investigations into cause and effect. Students apply engineering practices to design and construct a device to communicate over distances.

Art

Grade 1 students are introduced to a variety of art techniques, art mediums, and purposes in creating art. They have opportunities to explore various art stations including painting, drawing, art reading, looking, and building. We focus on the element of art: 'Line', exploring how lines can be used for creating patterns and designs as well as in creating more recognizable images after applying some drawing exercises. Other elements such as Shape, Color, and Form are introduced through inquiry-based questions. Playfulness and individual expression are practices that will continue throughout the year. Students have one, 90-minute lesson every eight days.

Music

In Grade 1 music, we focus on a combination of joyful and child-centered methodologies that emphasize singing games, rhythmic activities, and the exploration of pitch through solfege. Students also experience a hands-on and creative approach, using percussive instruments to create their own musical compositions, fostering a sense of rhythm and ensemble playing. The goal is to provide a dynamic and holistic music education that encourages active participation, creative expression, and a love for making music together. Students have the opportunity to perform and share their music in both informal and formal settings. Students have two 45-minute music lessons every eight days.

PE

Grade 1 students practice how to move safely in personal and general space. They explore skipping, hopping, jumping, catching, and balancing through individual and group games. Students explore fundamental movement skills that help enhance their body awareness, flexibility, balance, and coordination. Problem-solving, risk-taking, and decision-making skills are reinforced, as are respect and empathy. Students attend four 40-minute PE classes in every eight days.

Spanish

Grade 1 students develop an understanding of basic Spanish through exposure to authentic language and learning about the culture of different Spanish-speaking countries. 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. Listening skills are at the center of the learning, while speaking may start to appear as short answers to basic language prompts. In the first semester, the program covers basic vocabulary for greetings, feelings, numbers, colors, shapes, school supplies, clothing, and body parts. Students have three, 30-minute lessons every eight days.