

First Grade Curriculum Overview

First grade focuses on skill development across all disciplines through a hands-on approach, aimed at fostering a love of learning. Through completion of a research project, storytelling, writing, and other projects, students demonstrate lessons learned and apply that learning. Students build community through collaboration and character development through our Divrei Chaim and Middot (Jewish values). Chagigat Hasiddur is the milestone event in First Grade. This event celebrates students receiving their first siddurim. Students learn the words and meanings of many of the morning prayers throughout the year and showcase their knowledge at this event.

Literacy

First grade students continue to develop their skills through structured literacy, using print concepts, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. They learn how to ask and answer questions about key details in a text and retell stories using key details both orally and in writing. Students will learn how to describe characters, settings, and key events/plot in a story. They can tell the difference between books that tell stories and those that provide information. Teachers provide explicit instruction and support to students by working with them as a whole class, in small groups, and one on one, in order to continue to facilitate reading skill growth. First graders engage in the writing process and learn more about the different purposes for writing, which include opinion, informative/explanatory, and narrative. Students concentrate on opinion writing and personal narrative. They complete a written research project as well as some informational writing in science notebooks and during reading. First graders will have an opportunity to write personal, small stories from their lives and share them during Author's Chair!

Core Skills:

1. Reading

1. Demonstrates understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds; knows and applies grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words
2. Reads and writes high-frequency words
3. Reads grade-level text with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression on successive readings
4. Asks and answers questions about key details in a literary text
5. Retells stories; demonstrates understanding of their central message or lesson
6. Explains major differences between books that tell stories and books that give information
7. Uses illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events
8. Asks and answers questions about key details in a non-fiction text
9. Knows and uses various text features to locate information
10. Describes the key ideas of a text
11. Identifies basic similarities and differences between two texts on the same topic

2. Writing

1. Writes narratives including details and a sequence of events
2. Develops and strengthens writing by responding to questions and suggestions
3. Collaborates in shared research and writing projects
4. With guidance and support, recalls or gathers information from experience or provided sources to answer a question
5. Writes narratives including details and a sequence of events

3. Speaking and Listening

1. Participates effectively in collaborative discussions by listening, responding, and asking questions
2. Asks and answers questions about information presented in diverse media and formats
3. Speaks in complete sentences with relevant details when appropriate, expressing ideas and feelings clearly

4. Language

1. Demonstrates command of grade-level English grammar and conventions when writing and speaking
2. Demonstrates command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing

3. Spells untaught words phonetically, drawing on phonemic awareness and spelling conventions
4. Uses strategies to determine the meaning of words and phrases; accurately uses grade-appropriate vocabulary

Math

The Lower Division Mathematics Program, Math in Focus, emphasizes mastery of basic mathematical concepts, number sense, mental math and problem solving. Math concepts are presented in a context meaningful to the students moving from concrete objects to pictorial representations to abstract algorithms. Fewer topics taught in greater depth at each grade level help students understand the “how” as well as the “why.” Students build mathematical meaning and fluency to provide a solid conceptual foundation for problem solving.

In first grade, students develop strategies for adding and subtracting whole numbers based on their prior work with small numbers. In addition, they understand the concept of ones and tens and place value in the base ten number system. They develop an understanding of the relationship between addition and subtraction and develop efficient strategies for adding, subtracting and comparing within 100. First graders are introduced to number bonds to record sets and identify the parts and whole in a number sentence. Students explore measurement using non-standard units for length and weight. The geometric focus is on composition and decomposition of shapes and comparing their attributes. First graders can also describe and analyze data and solve simple problems.

Core Skills:

1. Mathematical Habits of Mind
 1. Makes sense of problems and perseveres in solving them
 2. Reasons abstractly and quantitatively
 3. Attends to precision

2. Operations and Algebraic Thinking
 1. Understands and applies properties of addition and subtraction
 2. Represents and solves problems involving addition and subtraction to 20
3. Numbers and Operations in Base Ten
 1. Counts, reads, writes and represents number of objects to 120
 2. Understands and uses properties of place value of ones and tens in addition and subtraction
4. Measurement and Data
 1. Measures and orders objects by length
 2. Tells and writes time in hours and half-hours using analog and digital clocks
 3. Organizes, represents, and interprets data
5. Geometry
 1. Reasons with shapes and their attributes

Social Studies

The first grade social studies curriculum focuses on patterns and chronological order of events of the recent past in addition to family and cultural traditions of the United States. The curriculum is integrated with the Judaic studies program as students learn the Jewish Values/Divrei Chaim and traditions. Our conflict management program models appropriate problem solving strategies to promote healthy interactions with peers. First grade students also learn about national secular holidays. They engage in our Helping Hands Service Learning Program, having the unique opportunity to consider how their Jewish identity helps them to understand the world around them, and how that identity carries with it a responsibility to make a positive difference in their world. Additionally, they participate in a unit about Then and Now, looking at school, home, and work and how these areas have changed over time. Through a field trip, interactive lessons, performances and projects, first grade students work on building their classroom community and create lasting connections to the world.

Core Skills

1. Applies skills and processes of social studies effectively
2. Demonstrates understanding of history concepts and content
 1. Ask questions and discuss ideas about patterns and chronological order of events from the past.
 2. Explain how the diverse perspectives and traditions of families from many cultures have shaped the United States.
3. Demonstrates understanding of geography concepts and content
 1. Use geographic terms and tools to describe places and spaces.
 2. Describe the characteristics of a community and how they are influenced by the environment.
4. Demonstrates understanding of economics concepts and content
 1. Understand that individuals work in different types of jobs to earn an income.
5. Demonstrates understanding of civics concepts and content
 1. Summarize how effective groups have responsible leaders and team members.
 2. Identify and explain how the significance of notable people, places, holidays, and civic symbols reflect the origins and values of the government and its citizens.
6. Demonstrates understanding of personal financial literacy
 1. Plan how to spend, share, and save money.

Science

Through the lower division science program, Full Option Science System (Foss) First graders will dive into science in our hands-on and engaging science units. Our three main units of study will be Sound, The Moon and Sky, and The Life Cycle of a Butterfly. We will be introducing the scientific way of thinking where our young scientists will ask questions, define problems, construct explanations, and design solutions.

Core Skills

1. Asks questions, defines problems, constructs explanations, and designs solutions
2. Plans and carries out investigations
3. Obtains, interprets, and communicates information

4. Knows and understands common properties, forms, and changes in matter and energy
 1. Sound can make matter vibrate and vibrating matter can make sound.
5. Knows and understands the characteristics and structure of living things, the processes of life, and how living things interact with each other and their environment
 1. All organisms have external parts that they use to perform daily functions.
 2. Young organisms are very much, but not exactly, like their parents, and also resemble other organisms of the same kind.
6. Knows and understands the processes and interactions of Earth's systems and the structure and dynamics of Earth and other objects in space
 1. Patterns of movement of the sun, moon and stars as seen from Earth can be observed, described and predicted.

Hebrew

In first grade, students at Denver Jewish Day School embark on a Hebrew curriculum called Niflaot, which was developed by *CET* (The Center for Educational Technology) in Israel. Niflaot is an innovative hybrid learning program for teaching Hebrew in school. The program combines fun booklets with a rich digital environment that includes units for both classroom learning and student individual practice.

The program has four components:

- Frontal class instruction
- Songs for listening and singing
- Workbook exercises
- Individual digital assignments

Throughout this curriculum, the students develop essential Hebrew literacy skills encompassing reading, writing, speaking, and listening. DJDS heavily emphasizes oral language and fostering speaking skills from an early age and throughout students'

Hebrew education. This comprehensive program utilizes a range of lively and creative authentic materials to immerse students in the learning process.

DJDS employs the Ivrit B'Ivrit method, meaning most classes are taught exclusively in Hebrew. This immersive environment allows students to engage with the language authentically. In first grade, students encounter words with vowels from all five vowel families, progressing to sentences and brief narratives. The concepts of gendered vocabulary and singular/plural terms in Hebrew are also introduced. Students revisit Hebrew block letters and vowels and gradually become acquainted with some Hebrew cursive letters during the second semester. The first grade units build on skills learned in kindergarten, continuing to integrate authentic Israeli texts, art, media, and music to introduce the cultural aspects of Hebrew. Students participate dynamically and vibrantly, showcasing their skills at various events throughout the year including Chaggigat Ha'Siddur and Yom Ha'Atzmaut celebrations featuring Hebrew song and dance.

Core Skills:

1. Listening

- Demonstrates understanding of classroom routine and directions given in Hebrew.
- Identify common words and expressions in a given text.
- Comprehend short sentences of personal communication.
- Listening comprehension to short stories, monologues, and short dialogues.

2. Speaking

- Introduce themselves, present people, and describe objects in their immediate involvement.
- Communicate in familiar phrases and short sentences.
- Answer a formulaic question in a short phrase or a sentence.

3. Reading

- Identify and name the letters of the printed alphabet.
- Identify common words and expressions in written context.
- Derive meaning from short and simple written texts.

4. Writing

- Write the letters of the alphabet in print.
- Copy words in print letters.
- Independently write and spell words in print letters.

Judaics

In Judaics, students learn about the holidays that fall during the school year. This includes Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Chanukah, Tu B'Shvat, Purim, Passover, Yom Ha'atzmaut, Lag B'Omer, and Shavuot. Students create books, learn songs, and do art projects related to these holidays. Students learn the origin and meaning of the holidays as well as the blessings and customs associated with each holiday. Each week, students learn the weekly Torah portion. This includes the story of Joseph being sold into slavery, the story of the golden calf, receiving the ten commandments, and many of the Jewish laws. Students discuss the meaning of the events in the Torah portions and lessons they could learn from the story.

In Tefilah, students complete their own siddurim and receive their first siddur at Chagigat HaSiddur. Students learn the meaning of the tefillot and share their knowledge during Chagigat HaSiddur. Tefillot studied include Modeh/Modah Ani, Mah Tov, Adon Olam, Birkot Hashachar, Baruch She'amar, Ashrei, Shema, parts of the Amidah, and Aleinu. Students also compose their own first grade prayer. Students learn about gratitude, community, and discuss the meaning and importance of Tefilah. Students also learn the blessings recited before eating various foods. We celebrate Shabbat each week in the classroom with blessings, music, and challah. Our Divrei Chaim and middot are also a big part of our curriculum and we implement these Jewish values into our daily classroom community culture.

Core Skills:

- Identifies common symbols of Shabbat and holidays.

- Apologizing and forgiving friends are Jewish values
- Retell key biblical narratives
- Name key characters in the Torah and their relationships to one another
- Connect observance of Shabbat with creation
- Treating others with respect and kindness is a Jewish value
- Able to recite common brachot for the holidays and participate in rituals
- Locate Israel on the map
- Brachot thank G-d for things we enjoy in the world and for mitzvot