

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 students take different amounts 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, 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 remain continuously aware of how their actions and words affect others and to model this awareness 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 whole-group reading with a grade-level text, small reading groups with teacher-selected texts, and partner and independent reading. Using our structured phonics program, Foundations, as a core daily resource, students build foundational reading skills such as decoding (sounding out words) and building fluency and expression. Through vocabulary and language-rich fairy tales, students build their understanding of plot, setting, and character, focusing on the feelings of and relationships between characters. Students gain an understanding of how a story's setting impacts the plot and the characters' words and actions. Students compare and contrast several versions of the same fairy tale from different cultures. During the second part of the semester, students explore nonfiction texts, learning how key text features help readers better understand and identify a text's main topic. Students learn to think about how details in an informational text are connected and build their knowledge about science and social studies topics. Throughout the semester, students build reading focus and stamina. For independent reading, students are guided in selecting books to ensure comprehension, enjoyment, and the development of good reading habits.

Writing

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 narratives and poetry, as well as writing across curricular areas. Whole-class instruction teaches students to develop a focused narrative with a beginning, middle, and end, using transition words and phrases to show the order of events. Students are taught to engage the reader by describing the characters and setting, and show how characters feel through their actions and dialogue. Through poetry writing, students are taught a variety of figurative language techniques such as similes, alliteration, and repetition. Throughout the semester, students are taught the conventions of capitalization and end punctuation. Teachers regularly confer with individual students to provide targeted instruction based on their needs. Using Foundations, word study is addressed in various ways, including a focus on high-frequency words, spelling patterns, handwriting, and editing strategies to improve their 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 minds 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

In Grade 2, students strengthen their number sense by counting forward and backward within 100, skip counting by 2s, 5s, and 10s, and using base-10 blocks and number lines to represent numbers and solve problems. They develop strategies for addition and subtraction - like bridging through 10, compacting jumps, and decomposing numbers - to move beyond counting by ones and begin solving multi-step problems. In geometry, they classify and build 2D shapes, explore polygons like triangles and quadrilaterals, and connect plane figures to 3D solids. In measurement, students compare length and time, work with standard units such as inches, and represent data using tally charts, bar graphs, picture graphs, and line plots.

Social Studies

Students in Grade 2 start the year by learning about their classmates and building their classroom community, agreements, and shared routines. In our Welcome to Our City unit, students work together to create a newcomer's guide to important places in our city of London. During this unit, students learn to name their location in different ways, compare and contrast various types of communities, explore human and physical geography, and use and create maps to find and show information about a place.

Science

The first science topic for Grade 2 is Matter and Materials. Students plan investigations and analyze data about properties to show which materials are best suited for particular purposes. From observations, evidence-based arguments are developed to determine the cause and effect of changes due to heating and cooling. Students also demonstrate that objects made of small parts can be disassembled and made into new objects. Our unit culminates in a challenge in ASL's MILL, allowing them to demonstrate their understanding of properties, materials, and the design process.

Art

Grade 2 students learn about collage and compositions. They explore a variety of techniques, art media, and purposes in creating art through their own expression and by studying artists such as Frank Bowling and Lita Albuquerque, among others, for inspiration. Students use paper and paint to explore various design techniques, including representational work of landscapes and cityscapes, culminating in still life. They learn how compositions and colors can be used for a variety of art-making ideas, designing work that supports the development of their individual artistic voice. Students are introduced to monochromatic work to challenge their creativity and imagination, to later add other colors. All lessons start with inquiry-based questions and encourage the practice of fine motor skills. Students have two 50-minute art lessons every eight days.

Music

In Grade 2 music, students develop their singing voices while experiencing music from various genres. They learn to connect music to daily life and understand that music can be a part of their lifelong learning journey. Students continue to develop their understanding of musical notation and their enjoyment of music as a means of self-expression. Students begin to create rhythmic patterns and melodies. They compose using pitched percussion and then notate their compositions. Notation in Grade 2 focuses on repeated notes, steps, and skips. Students develop correct playing techniques on classroom instruments. Students will participate in informal performances during the first semester. Students attend three 35-minute lessons every eight days.

PE

The Grade 2 program is designed to further develop fundamental movement skills for more dynamic physical activities. Students participate in activities that develop their rhythm, locomotor, and manipulative skills through cooperative, partner, and group games. The dance and gymnastics unit develops rhythm, balance, coordination, flexibility, and strength through skills practice and creative movement with opportunities to collaborate and create their own sequences. The hand-eye skills unit focuses on developing and practicing skills such as rolling a ball, throwing and catching, hand dribbling, passing, and aiming at a target. Activities are all cooperative and support playing together through inclusive and collaborative games. In the aquatics unit, students learn how to be safe and feel confident in deep water by developing their floating, treading, and swimming skills. Grade 2 students have four 40-minute lessons every eight days.

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 will cover more vocabulary for greetings, feelings, numbers, colors, school subjects, family, and describing words. Students have three 35-minute lessons every eight days.