



Grade Level Summary: 2nd Grade

Art

Students learn various techniques, skills, and artistic applications by studying historic content and culture through the eyes and hands of an artist. Studies overlap and are integrated with other grade-level subjects and classes.

Language Arts

Second grade uses the Wonders program along with additional supplemental resources for Language Arts instruction. Students build reading comprehension skills and strategies while developing vocabulary, grammar, spelling, handwriting, and writing skills.

Weekly instruction includes spelling activities and assessments, grammar practice, and Handwriting Without Tears lessons. Writing instruction focuses on a variety of genres throughout the year, including narrative, opinion, persuasive, poetry, and nonfiction writing. Students learn to write personal narratives, fictional stories, poems, how-to pieces, opinion papers, persuasive letters, and informational texts.

Students also respond regularly to literature and informational texts through written responses, while journal writing is incorporated into both classwork and homework.

Phonics instruction is grounded in the IMSE Orton-Gillingham approach, which students first begin using in Kindergarten. This structured, multisensory method supports the development of decoding, encoding, spelling, and reading fluency skills and provides students with a strong foundation for continued growth as readers and writers.

Library

In second grade, students are engaged in library activities that provide opportunities for them to learn to access, evaluate, use, and integrate information literacy skills into all areas of learning. They continue to understand the organization of the library, check out library materials responsibly, and understand who to ask for help in the library. Additionally, students read a good representation of a variety of texts, select and use materials in a variety of formats to support personal interests, and share information.

Mathematics

Second grade uses the Savvas Learning curriculum along with supplemental resources to provide students with comprehensive mathematics instruction. Daily math routines include Minute Math, daily review, hands-on lessons using manipulatives, short instructional videos, guided practice, and independent practice.

Throughout the year, students develop a strong understanding of addition and subtraction and learn a variety of strategies for solving problems. Areas of study include addition and subtraction within two- and three-digit numbers, mental math, place value to 1,000, working with equal groups, counting money, basic geometry, measurement, time, graphs, and data. Students are encouraged to explain their mathematical thinking, apply different problem-solving strategies, and build accuracy and confidence with increasingly complex concepts.

Music

Students continue the exploration of their voices, audiation (inner hearing), and more complex rhythm patterns through notation, rhythmic speech, listening maps, and percussion instruments. They start singing in rounds and partner songs to introduce singing in harmony. They continue to transfer speech patterns to Orff instruments and start to accompany themselves on these instruments as well as improvise. Lastly, they continue to learn to sing with expression and perform in front of an audience.

Physical Education

In Physical Education, students experience the joy of movement while building skills that reflect our school's core values. Meeting four times each week, classes emphasize teamwork, leadership, and personal growth. Every student has the chance to step into a leadership role, practicing what it means to lead by example, follow directions, and support peers as positive teammates. Through a variety of activities, students not only develop new skills but also gain confidence while developing the muscles of diligence and resilience. Additionally, starting at the second grade level, there is an advanced progression of complexity in gameplay, engaging the students' strategic mindset and further development of motor skills.

Science

Second-grade students participate in a program called Project Lead the Way. The goal of this program is to engage young minds in science, technology, engineering, and math so that they build confidence, explore interests, and set themselves up for success in middle school, high school, and beyond. The science curriculum taps into the students' natural curiosity and enthusiasm to empower them to become problem solvers. Students use structured approaches, like the engineering design process, and employ critical thinking. The units of study explore life, physical, and earth sciences. Students discover the design process and how engineers influence their lives. Units in second grade focus on materials science, including properties of matter, living things, diversity of life, and the changing Earth. They explore structure and function by identifying products around them designed by engineers. The students practice applying knowledge to solve problems in the classroom and beyond.

Social-Emotional Learning

Second-grade Social-Emotional Learning uses the Toolbox Project curriculum to help students strengthen their emotional and social skills. Students continue learning about the 12 "tools" they can use to better understand themselves, manage their emotions, solve problems, and interact positively with others.

Through practical, age-appropriate activities and discussions, students develop resilience, empathy, self-awareness, and effective communication skills. These lessons help children build healthy relationships, make thoughtful choices, and approach challenges with confidence and kindness.

Social Studies

Our second grade social studies curriculum uses California Studies Weekly along with specific monthly thematic units and hands-on learning experiences. Together, these lessons address the California History–Social Science Content Standards.

Throughout the year, students learn to distinguish between events that happened long ago and those that occurred more recently. They develop map and geography skills by describing the absolute and relative locations of people, places, and environments. Students also learn about government and citizenship, including important governmental institutions and practices in the United States and other countries.

In addition, students explore basic economic concepts, including goods and services, producers and consumers, and their own roles within the economy. Through our monthly units, students have opportunities to apply these concepts through literature, projects, discussions, field experiences, and real-world connections.

Spanish

Students learn and use numbers in dates, math, and history in the second-grade Spanish class. They understand and use dialogues utilizing grade-level Spanish vocabulary. Students study vocabulary for seasons, clothing, classroom objects, family, colors, parts of the body, and home. They master greetings in everyday life. Students develop an elementary understanding of specific vocabulary for holidays and some customs of Hispanic cultures.

Technology

This year, second graders will begin composing digital documents and slideshows using their SMEDS.com Google Workspace account — a safe, school account where the only digital interaction that can occur is among peers and faculty. Their papers and presentations will generally be nonfiction works about topics of study within their core classes. These documents will be shared remotely with their peers and/or teachers to foster real-time feedback and collaboration. Students will also learn how to search appropriately and effectively to yield results that are both age-appropriate and desired. Results for all search queries are filtered by our SMEDS restrictions and monitored by GoGuardian.

Workshop

Students participate in four differentiated small-group workshops twice each week. Each workshop lasts approximately 20 minutes and provides targeted instruction based on individual student needs.

Workshop groups are flexible and change throughout the year as students develop new skills and require different levels of support or enrichment. Areas of focus include Writer's Workshop, reading fluency and comprehension, IMSE syllabication, dictation and Red Word practice, and math workshop activities. These small groups allow teachers to provide individualized instruction, reinforce important skills, and challenge students at their appropriate learning level.