

First Grade Curriculum

Introduction: Throughout the year, your child will be immersed in all kinds of fascinating subjects. Together we will be thinking about various truths about God and how they are integrated into all we do each and every day. In addition to this we will think about what our response to our amazing God should be! In first grade we highlight obedience, reverence, loyalty and gratefulness. We will think about God before he created our world. Then watch how his plan unfolds throughout history. The exciting part will be discovering we too have a story, and how our story fits into his story!

Bible: We will study how God interacted with people in Biblical times as we travel through the Old and some of the New Testament. Students will begin to understand the character and nature of God as revealed to us in creation, in the Scriptures, and in the person and work of Jesus Christ. They will see that the Big Story of God says, "I made you, I love you and I want a relationship with you. I want you to be part of my work in my kingdom". We invite students to participate in God's story by entering a personal relationship with him, to be in constant conversation with him, accept his offer of salvation, and commit all aspects of their lives to him.

Bible Memory: There are various Bible passages we as a first grade will learn and hold in our hearts. A copy of these passages will be posted on the blog. While spending extra time practicing this at home is very beneficial, we do go over our memory work almost every day.

Math: Illustrative Math is our new math program. It gives us an opportunity to learn together- parents, students, and teachers working together. It contains a daily warm up, new lessons, and class practice.

Our math block of the day is a combination of implementing the *Illustrative Math* curriculum and working through the math centers. The various centers include math with a teacher, math with a friend, math practice with technology, and math by myself, (written math.)

Grammar & Word Feature: We use the Spanish curriculum created by add.a.lingua. Each day provides us with many opportunities for the children to read, write and speak. We strive hard to maintain a "Spanish ONLY environment" so that we can take full advantage of the time we are in school to practice the language.

Phonics: We use the Heggerty phonics curriculum. Students practice identifying the initial, medial, and final sounds. They play with the syllables in the words they hear by substituting them with other syllables to make new words and also work on rhyming.

Reading:

Daily 5: The classroom structure I use is called the Daily 5. Soon your child will be talking about this at home. The Daily 5 is a literacy structure that teaches independence and gives children the skills needed to create a lifetime love of reading and writing. It consists of five tasks that are introduced individually. When introduced to each task, the children discuss what it looks like, sounds like and feels like to engage in the task independently. Then the children work on building their stamina until they are successful at being independent while doing that task. These are the five tasks: Read to self (Leer a mi mismo), Work in writing (Escritura), Read to someone (Leer con un amigo), Listen to Reading (Escuchar un libro), Word Work (Trabajar con palabras.) When all five tasks have been introduced and the children are fully engaged in reading and writing I am able to work with small groups and confer with children one-on-one. This structure is effective, the results are amazing and the children look forward to Daily 5 time.

Mentor Texts: From these stories we learn about the structure of books such as: setting, characters, problems, solutions, and plot structure. We also will work on developing comprehension skills by making connections to other situations, questioning, inferring, making mental images as we read and synthesizing the story. We use these texts to find examples of our weekly word features, vocabulary words, high frequency words, and grammar features in context. Most of these books are all centered around the first grade theme of community.

Non-fiction books: We learn that some books are true and factual. Reading these books requires a different approach than reading a fictional story. We will learn how to determine importance in the text as we compare the elements between fiction and non-fiction.

Guided Reading Groups: Each child meets with me in a small group a couple times a week. The children are grouped by similar reading levels, and learning needs, for example, which reading strategy they are currently working on. During this time, I am able to determine individual reading strengths and future teaching points. While I am running guided reading groups, the other students are actively learning in the other 5 of the Daily 5 choices: read to self, read to someone, listen to reading, work on writing, or work with words. We slowly build up to the full Daily 5 menu of choices.

Independent Reading: It is extremely important for beginning readers to read many materials at their independent reading level. This helps them to consolidate all the good things they are learning about the reading process and build confidence. Many opportunities are provided in the classroom for independent reading.

Poetry: We use poetry to introduce and learn new words, practice fluency and expression, as well as provide context for the grammar and word features of the week. A new poem is usually introduced each week.

Word Wall: The Word Wall is the place where commonly used words are displayed. When we introduce words (5 new ones each week) to the children, we teach them to think critically about the word. During the week we practice these words in reading and writing. You can help your child learn these words by reviewing them at home, reading and writing them or finding them in the literature you are reading at home.

Word/Syllable Study: We begin the year by studying the 5 vowels and the sounds they make. Next we study a different letter and the 5 syllables it makes (for most letters.) We practice these syllables in reading and writing, including in our study of the weekly mentor text and poem.

Word Sorts: Each week we will be actively involved in discovering common word features and grammar features. Children will be sorting pictures/words according to these features.

Take Home Books: Most Fridays your child will take home the book(s) he or she has been working on during the week or past weeks. This is a time for you to celebrate how well your child is reading them! The books are now considered to be at your child's independent reading level (even though there still might be a few tricky parts throughout the book.) Praise not only fluent reading, but also the strategies your child uses to solve these tricky words.

Please keep careful track of your child's books.

There is a \$10.00 fee for lost books.

Writing:

Modeled/shared writing: Mini-lessons on specific areas of writing will occur each writing workshop time or more. These lessons are taught to the whole class in order to help them learn about different genres of writing and how to become effective writers. They will include talks about how to generate ideas, share with others, choose just the right words, add details, build sentence fluency, edit for mistakes, and publish a final copy.

Independent Writing: During writing workshop time children will write independently on a topic of their choice or on a topic modeled in a mini-lesson. Children are encouraged to use what they know about words in order to help them

write. This will include using sound spelling for unknown words and book spelling for words we have already learned on the Word Wall. It will include saying words slowly to hear all the sounds and using word wall words. For beginning writers, it may include labeling pictures or writing stories with pictures.

Handwriting: We use the Zaner-Bloser curriculum in order to teach proper letter formation.

Science: We are using the Phenomenal Science Curriculum this year. Through hands-on activities, student journals and non-fiction books we learn about weather, sorting and organisms. We do little projects during class and special activities that will help the students to remember and learn about science in a special way.

Social Studies: The main theme of social studies is family and school. We will look at these themes through the eyes of culture, geography, economics, history, government and citizenship. We learn about how to do your best in everything you do, to love your environment and God's creations and how to be part of this Earth and take care for the things we have around us.

Specials Schedule

Monday: Music 10:25-10:55

Tuesday: Mandarin 11:00-11:30 & PE 2:30-2:55

Wednesday: PE 8:50-9:15, Mandarin 10:55-11:25 &
Tech 11:30-12:00

Thursday: Music 2:55-3:25 & Library 10:55-11:10

Friday: Art 2:10-3:00

Specials Teachers:

P.E. – Susan Miller

Music – Kendra Gontjes

Library – Laurie Joustra

Art – Jael Stilwell

Technology – Emily Sloterbeek

Mandarin – Joecy Fan