



Second Grade Curriculum Overview

I. Community

Each day the Second Grade gathers for a morning meeting in order to build a sense of community. Our discussions promote the values we strive to live out each day: respect, love, understanding, and selflessness. These values are incorporated into our school's mission. Our morning meeting helps to establish a cooperative, peaceful and safe environment in which to learn and grow together. We also build community through games, songs, poems, and class surveys from *The Responsive Classroom*.

Students in Second Grade are partnered with a Pre-K student that contributes to community-building within the school and enables them to become a role model and friend.

II. Language Arts

Reading workshop is based on The Reading Project at Teacher's College, Columbia University. It is a comprehensive approach to teaching reading in which children read books independently at a "just right" level for them. Students read in partnerships as well. They are introduced to topics such as gathering information, characterization, story elements, making predictions, and retelling events during mini-lessons. Students are taught problem solving strategies to help them figure out words they don't know, as well as strengthen their phonetic foundation and sight word vocabulary. The idea is for children to take on novel texts, and gain fluency and independence. The ultimate goal in reading is to help children learn how to use independent reading strategies successfully and to develop a life-long love of literature.

Children take part in activities to extend their reading, such as writing, art projects, drama, and discussions in order to make connections between texts they have read and their own life experiences. Infusing their knowledge with written language that is meaningful to them occurs in a variety of ways: word studies, reading response, book jackets, letters, posters and story writing. There are various types of reading that the children take part in: guided reading, independent reading, partner reading, being read to by the teacher, and shared reading.

Writing Workshop is based on The Writing Project at Teachers College, Columbia University. Workshops and small group mini-lessons address all aspects of the writing process. Different genres and types of craft are studied by reading literature. Students apply what they learn to their own writing. Mini-lessons address aspects of the writing process. Individual conferences are held to provide each student with selective feedback on content, topic development and writing mechanics. We use *Handwriting Without Tears: Printing Power* to practice letter formation and print handwriting.

For spelling, we are using a new program called "Foundations." This program is based on the widely acclaimed and highly structured Wilson Language program. "Foundations" provides integrated instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary development and comprehension strategies. It relies on explicit, systematic instruction using repetition, feedback and motor memory. Student progress is monitored with tests, observation, and evaluation of their work. Each week students are presented with words based on the weekly phonics lessons. Words will be taken from each student's writing as well. Students choose from one of nine exercises in their spelling notebook to practice the words they are learning in the lesson. Students are tested on these words in school on Fridays.

III. Social Studies

Students learn more about their global community and themselves through various units of study. Units of study include The Peace Corps, Colonial America, and Thailand. Field Trips and correspondences enhance the social studies program. Second Graders perform a dramatic production in the winter for the school community.

IV. Mathematics

Math Trailblazers is used to enable students to actively engage in mathematical child-centered activities that will build their conceptual understanding and skills in mathematics. The Trailblazers curriculum provides students with opportunities to work in partnerships, small groups, and large groups. It focuses on vital math concepts: building number sense, developing strategies for solving problems and sharing these strategies with classmates, and collecting, graphing and analyzing data. Students learn how to use various tools to solve problems. Some of these include number lines, ten-frames, coins, unifex cubes, and the 200 chart.

V. Quakerism/Religion

Quakerism overlaps with community building and our Social Studies curriculum. We consider community building a major component of Quakerism and Religion as it teaches values, peaceful problem-solving, the process of consensus, and service and respect for the Quaker belief “that of God in everyone.” The foundation of our teaching at FSH is derived from the Quaker philosophy that each child has God’s light within that we come to acknowledge and to honor. Quakerism also includes appreciation of diversity and multiculturalism.

VI. Coordinate Classes

The Second Grade program is enriched by various coordinate classes. Second graders participate in Physical Education three times a week, Music and Art twice a week, and Science, Library, Technology, and Spanish once a week.

VII. Homework

Homework for Second Grade involves reading for 20 minutes (or more) and writing an entry in a reading log each night. Math homework and “Foundations” homework is given throughout the week. Students should study their spelling words each night to master these words. A weekly spelling test is given on Friday.