

First Grade Academics

Language Arts Curriculum- Overall, our Language Arts curriculum focuses on four main components: word knowledge, comprehension, fluency, and writing. In first grade, we use the reading series by Pearson Scott Foresman called Reading Street. The series provides instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension using many trade books and relevant literature. We also work to develop vocabulary, writing and spelling. The tentative spelling and vocabulary words from this program for each quarter are attached. This series is used in conjunction with guided reading to provide students with the best opportunities to learn to read to their fullest potential.

Guided Reading- Guided Reading occurs when teachers work with a small group of students who are on similar reading levels to support their individual development of effective reading strategies and processes. The goal of guided reading is for students to apply reading strategies independently to read books with increasing levels of difficulty. During guided reading, the teacher is either reading with, or working on, a specific skill that just those students need. Guided reading removes the "one size fits all" approach to reading, giving each student the opportunity to develop essential skills at his/her own pace.

Towards the beginning of the school year, your child will read and retell a benchmark or standard story with his/her teacher. The teacher will determine your child's specific level to help best tailor the instruction.

Parents can support their child's reading development by reading to their child, listening to their child read, and discussing what their child read.

Homework- First grade students are expected to complete homework nightly, excluding weekends. Generally, all first grade teachers assign 2-3 Homelinks (math worksheets that review lessons covered in class) per week and nightly reading assignments. Homework assignments are to be returned to teachers the following day. Homework is something that most first grade students enjoy and should be a time for you to share the joy of learning with your child. Thank you in advance for your support with first grade homework.

Literacy Work Stations- During your child's year in first grade, he/she will participate in literacy work stations. A literacy work station is an area within the classroom where students work independently or in small groups, using instructional materials to explore and expand their literacy skills. Work stations reinforce and/or extend learning, often without the assistance of the classroom teacher. Works stations give students the opportunity to practice reading, writing, and listening through hands-on activities, instead of worksheets.

Work stations are for all students, and each student has equal access to the stations provided. Work stations allow the teacher to differentiate his/her instruction for the various skill levels within the classroom.

Work station routines are established early in the school year, and each teacher develops his/her stations. The teacher may begin the year by introducing only a few stations, and then add more once the students are familiar with the process. Throughout the year, materials and activities are changed to reflect the student's progression, strategies taught, and topics studied.

Prior to beginning work stations, teachers model appropriate behavior, and communicate clear, explicit expectations to the

students. As a result, students gain independence and a strong work ethic.

Writer's Workshop- In Writer's Workshop, students are given the tools and opportunities to express themselves through writing. After a daily mini-lesson that focuses on a specific writing skill or task, students are given time to write and apply what was taught in the mini-lesson by creating books, lists, letters, and other types of writing. Students will share their writing pieces with peers and also meet weekly with the teacher to discuss their work.



At the end of each unit, your child will come home with a number of writing pieces that they have worked hard to create. You may notice that some of these pieces may or may not have been edited. Each child chooses one book to "fancy and fix" for our end of unit celebration. Our main focus is to motivate students to express their thoughts and ideas through writing and to see the connection between language, reading and writing. When writing independently, we encourage students to stretch out the words to hear sounds; spell the best they can, and add details to their pictures. Please take some time to let your child read his or her stories to you and let him or her know what a wonderful writer he/she is!

Math- Everyday Math (see attached handout)

Science and Social Studies- These subjects are taught with big books as well as teacher resources. Examples of concepts covered in Science include but are not limited to: changes in matter, animal adaptations, energy and simple machines. In Social Studies, concepts include but are not limited to: mapping, human adaptations, national symbols, cultural differences, and historic leaders.