

FIRST GRADE

Curriculum Overview



Social Studies

First grade builds upon the self-awareness developed in Kindergarten. Units include:

- Appropriate behavior
- United States and our various cultures
- Neighborhoods: city, state, country, & continent
- History as the story of our country
- Families

Physical Education

Students learn, develop, and apply skills needed for participation in personal fitness and lifetime activities that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. Concepts introduced and developed include:

- Fundamental gross motor skills
- Movement and spatial awareness
- Health-related fitness
- Cooperative skills

Visual Arts

The purpose of the visual arts curriculum is to have students grow creatively, intellectually, emotionally, and aesthetically. The content standards include:

- Understand and apply media, techniques, and processes
- Use knowledge of art elements and principles of design
- Choose and evaluate ideas, subject forms, and symbols
- Understand visual arts in relation to history and cultures
- Reflect on and assess student work
- Make the connections between arts and other disciplines

Music

The general music program will develop the students' understanding and the relationship of music to other disciplines and cultures as well as history. Content standards include:

- Singing
- Performing on a variety of instruments
- Improvising melodies
- Composing and arranging
- Reading and notating music
- Listening, analyzing, and describing music
- Evaluating music and musical performances

General Information

Technology

The goal of technology education in District 204 is to provide students with the opportunity for technological literacy starting with the elementary curriculum. Our emphasis with students is the application of technology across all grade levels and curricular areas as well as the development of problem-solving and critical-thinking skills.

Reporting to Parents

Classroom progress is reported through quarterly report cards, annual conferences, and informal parent-teacher communication. Student evaluation is consistent with District goals and State Standards.

Testing

The District achievement testing program assesses the strengths/needs of our instructional programs and measures the achievement of individual students. Testing includes standardized tests, State tests, District assessments, and classroom evaluations.

Homework

Homework at the elementary level begins in an informal fashion but becomes more formal and requires more time and effort as the child progresses through each grade.

Parents are expected to be sufficiently interested in their child's education to commit the time and energy needed to monitor/supervise the child's home study and thereby insure that he/she makes a reasonable effort to complete homework assignments.



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Academic Program

Language Arts

Language Arts is composed of several interrelated areas: reading, writing, spelling, listening, and speaking. At the elementary level, the student is encouraged to learn to communicate clearly through development in these five areas. The *Immersion Approach* is used in the teaching of writing to capitalize on the natural connection between reading and writing. The *6 + 1 Trait Model* is utilized for teaching and assessing writing. This model focuses on qualities that define strong writing: conventions, ideas, organization, word choice, sentence fluency, and voice.

Reading

- Develop an understanding for literature and phonics through a balanced literacy program
- Use phonemic awareness knowledge to identify and recognize rhyme, letter/sound relationships and patterns in words
- Use letter-sound knowledge and age appropriate sight vocabulary to read
- Use a variety of reading strategies to self-monitor and self-correct miscues that interfere with meaning
- Read fiction and non-fiction materials for specific purposes
- Use text clues and prior knowledge of topics to make and justify predictions
- Read age appropriate material orally with accuracy, rhythm, volume, and flow
- Respond to analytical and interpretive questions based on information in text, including graphs, pictures, maps, and diagrams
- Recognize, discuss, and retell the structure of a story, read or heard, in sequential order
- Describe and compare characters, setting and/or events in stories or pictures
- Investigate self-selected/teacher selected literature from a variety of authors and cultures
- Make connections between texts, personal ideas, and lives

Writing

- Write simple sentences with correct subject/verb complement pattern including appropriate capitalization and punctuation

- Use appropriate prewriting strategies (e.g., drawing, brainstorming, idea mapping, graphic organizers) to generate and organize ideas with teacher assistance
- Compose a focused piece of writing with a beginning, middle, and end
- Elaborate and support written content with facts, details, and description
- Begin to evaluate and reflect on own writing and that of others
- Use the writing process to develop a basic narrative and expository piece
- Experiment with different forms of creative writing (e.g., song, poetry, journaling, short fiction)
- Communicate connections and ideas in all subject areas through written response

Spelling

- Use phonemic clues phonetic and/or developmental spelling to spell unfamiliar words
- Correctly spell appropriate high frequency words

Listening

- Listen attentively by facing speaker, making eye contact, and paraphrasing what is said
- Listen to and follow a story read orally
- Ask questions and respond to questions from the teacher and from group members to improve comprehension
- Follow directions given orally

Speaking

- Retell a story orally in the correct sequence
- Participate in discussions around a common topic
- Present brief oral reports, using language and vocabulary appropriate to the message and audience (e.g., show and tell)

Mathematics

Everyday Mathematics encourages teachers and students to explore more of the spectrum of mathematical ideas through a deeper understanding of key mathematical concepts and an in-depth study of all the content strands of mathematics.

The curriculum allows students to construct an understanding of mathematics from their own experience, and includes practical routines to build arithmetic skills that are essential for building number sense, estimation skills, and flexibility in a problem-rich environment. Important concepts or skills recur with variations throughout the curriculum, and concepts are introduced and revisited in a variety of formats providing considerable practice.

Our focus is to have students recognize that there are various ways to accomplish a task, and to use the best tools and strategies for solving problems. This is done by establishing a framework for dialogue about mathematics between the teacher and students.

Content strands include:

- Operations and Computation
- Numeration
- Patterns, Functions & Algebra
- Data and Chance
- Measurement and Reference Frames
- Geometry

Age-appropriate, essential mathematics skills (automaticity) are also taught and practiced daily (beginning in the second-half of the year) through our **Otter Creek Mathematics** skills program.

Science/Health

The purpose of science is to provide students with balanced, (Life, Earth, Physical and Health) relevant, hands-on opportunities and experiences to better understand science and to promote scientific literacy.

First Grade topics include:

- Life – Going Buggy (Entomology)
- Earth – Earth and Rocks
- Physical – Air and Weather
- Health – Inside Story
- Planetarium – Intro to Solar System

Each Unit or Kit is explored over a period of several weeks. Leveled-Readers serve to explore selected content areas