

Second Grade Overview

Second grade is a magical time of wonder and exploration with creative opportunities and enrichment experiences for all students. Second grade students travel around the world across all subjects. Using adventure journals, students record their discoveries and are able to reflect on what this new knowledge means to them as learners and explorers of our world.

Reading

The second grade reading program balances fiction and non-fiction reading materials. Students rotate through a variety of literature genres and participate in classroom book clubs. The use of various note taking strategies as well as graphic organizers allow students to track their thinking as reading materials increase in length and complexity. The three main areas of focus in reading are vocabulary, reading skills, and reading strategies that are necessary for comprehension. A basic foundation of skills combined with reading extensions encourages and motivates students to be successful lifetime readers.

Spelling

The second grade spelling curriculum, *Primary Spelling by Pattern*, uses an approach of teaching structured language and word study, which is grounded in the idea that English spelling is predictable if students know how to think about words. The program emphasizes spelling patterns, word structure and its relation to word meaning, and high frequency words most often used in writing. It also continues a strong emphasis in phonics by teaching and reinforcing the 72 phonemes in the English language. The program requires students to deconstruct, analyze, and compare words.

Grammar

The *Shurley English* curriculum teaches grammar and written composition skills. Students learn a catchy jingle for each part of speech (nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, pronouns, prepositions, and articles) and how to classify those parts of speech in sentences. The combination of visual, verbal, and written activities addresses all different learning styles. As sentences become increasingly complex, students show mastery in identifying parts of speech and their syntax, and learn proper usage, capitalization, and punctuation. This mastery enables students to construct sentences, paragraphs and longer compositions with ease.

Writing

The language arts writing curriculum is balanced between the mechanics and content of written expression. The formation of proper paragraphs is studied through creative writing, research projects, and journal writing. Written skill application is apparent across the curriculum as students master basic writing skills and participate in extensions. The handwriting curriculum focuses on correct D'Nealian manuscript letter formation for the first semester and then transitions into cursive handwriting during the second semester.

Math

The core of the second grade mathematics curriculum is *Dimensions Math*. The *Dimensions Math* program promotes strong number sense, concrete examples, and hands-on activities to reinforce new skills. Main focal points are practice and mastery of addition, subtraction, and multiplication of basic facts, computation, measurement concepts, mental calculation, money, fractions and time. The curriculum incorporates challenges and extensions in problem-solving and practical application of computational and conceptual math skills.

Science

Using the *Macmillan/McGraw-Hill Science: A Closer Look* textbook, our second grade science curriculum covers living things, habitats, weather and sky, matter, motion and energy. In order to promote a common scientific language among learners, observations, resources, and vocabulary pertaining to each unit are recorded in journals and/or lab reports. Students enjoy hands-on, cooperative investigations both in the classroom and in the St. George science lab.

Social Studies

Using the *Core Knowledge* curriculum, our second graders study the following topics: Americans Move West, Making the Constitution, Ancient Greece, Ancient China, Geography of the Americas, Civil Rights Leaders, and citizenship. The social studies curriculum integrates with all subject areas. Students are given the opportunity to research topics of interest and apply what they have learned through special projects such as our famous inventor presentations. Second graders have Adventure Club on Fridays where they participate in hands-on comprehensive activities.

Social and Emotional Development

The St. George social and emotional curriculum is based on the *Responsive Classroom* model, which takes a proactive approach that focuses on creating a loving and respectful classroom community where each child feels valued and known by his or her teachers and peers. Every day begins with a morning meeting where students are greeted by name and invited to share about themselves. During this time, teachers introduce a variety of social skills throughout the year including: identifying feelings of self and others, resolving conflict, showing kindness, listening and responding, regulating emotions, practicing empathy, being a good citizen, and standing up for what is right. These skills are then discussed and modeled frequently by children and teachers alike. This approach provides each student with the tools to grow his or her own emotional intelligence, while also creating an environment of connectivity and care.

Co-Curricular Classes

Students attend a developmentally appropriate chapel daily. They also regularly attend the following co-curricular classes: art, library, music, Spanish, STEAM, and physical education.