



# First Grade Curriculum 2009-2010

**Reading:** Foundation for Reading; *Go Phonics*; *Explode the Code*; McGraw Hill/SRA: *Open Court*

Reading is an essential part of a student's educational program. In this process, students learn many different strategies to help them decipher the code we call reading. Students are taught the three cueing systems (meaning, structure and visual graphophonics). Our reading curriculum includes:

**Print and Book Awareness:** Students study the constancy of words and the relationship between pictures and text. Students learn to track the directionality of print and recognize words versus letters, word length, sentences, punctuation and boundaries. Students also learn to recognize book concepts (title, title page, cover, glossary).

**Alphabet:** Students learn to recognize letters, letter sounds, and sounds in words; students practice alphabetizing.

**Phonics:** Students learn consonants, short and long vowel patterns, blends, digraphs, and diphthongs, as well as how to decode words through phonemic awareness, syllable recognition, segmentation, and blending words.

**Comprehension Strategies:** To increase comprehension, students learn to ask and answer questions, clarify information, predict and confirm predictions, make connections, summarize and visualize. Students practice comprehension skills: identifying cause and effect, classifying and categorizing, comparing and contrasting, sequencing, drawing conclusions, identifying main ideas and details, and distinguishing between reality and fantasy.

**Vocabulary:** To develop vocabulary, students explore antonyms, homonyms, synonyms, multiple meaning words, compound words, idioms, prefixes, suffixes, endings, and word families. Students also use context clues, word position, time and order words, and utility words to predict or decode unknown words and build vocabulary.

**Extended Reading:** Students are given decodable take-home books that correspond with the lessons. They read non-fiction texts coinciding with science and social studies units. They also participate in literature circles reading such texts as *George and Martha*, *Henry and Mudge*, and *the Box Car Children*. DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) silent reading is a part of the curriculum.

**Spelling:** Foundation for Reading; *Go Phonics*; McCracken: *Spelling Through Phonics*

As students learn the sound patterns visually in reading, they will use the sound patterns in spelling. Patterns used include:

- Initial consonants
- Final consonants
- Short vowels
- Consonant blends with short vowels
- Consonant digraphs with short vowels
- Vowel-consonant-silent e patterns
- Double vowels
- Blends with long vowels
- Digraphs with long vowels
- R-controlled vowels
- Vowel diphthongs

These patterns are introduced and then reinforced throughout the year on daily exercises.

## **Religion:** Harcourt: *Call to Faith*

Religion in first grade teaches of God's love and helps students gain a deeper understanding of their faith and the rich traditions of the Catholic Church.

**Themes:** Religion in the first-grade helps students to come to know Jesus and hear his Call to Faith. Through activities, prayers, and practices, the children come to understand key concepts such as the Trinity, the Life and Teachings of Jesus and belonging to the Church. Students explore the concepts of making moral choices, following Jesus, and caring for God's creation. They begin learning about the Mass, the seven sacraments, the Saints, and are invited to share God's kingdom.

**Prayer:** There are daily prayer times using various prayer experiences. Students learn about prayers of gratitude, praise and petition. Students also participate as prayer leader at least once per year. Formal prayers taught include: The Our Father, The Hail Mary and the Glory Be to the Father. Students experience various prayer rituals as related to the curriculum.

**Mass:** Students attend Mass regularly with their class. First graders participate in a special way (reading, singing, etc) in one of these school Masses.

**Social Justice:** Using *The Call to Discipleship Through Justice: Service & Advocacy* curriculum, students put their faith into action, engaging in practical works of justice, service and advocacy in age appropriate ways.

## **Language Arts, Writer's Workshop, 6+1 Traits of Writing:** *Go Phonics*

Writing is taught in first grade using a writer's workshop format. Mini lessons are taught on various subjects: procedures for the writing workshop, ideas for writing, the writing process, setting, matching pictures with text, writing that creates mind pictures, and writing with a beginning, middle, and end. Lessons in the writing process include:

**Prewriting:** Students use prewriting activities (T-charts, and "what, why, how") to discover topics they know and care about. Students are encouraged to develop a sense of their purpose and the effect they have on their audience.

**Rough Copy:** When writing a rough draft, the focus is getting ideas down on paper. First graders are encouraged to spell as best they can or use the word wall or dictionaries for help.

**Revising:** Students will be encouraged to share their work for clarification and questions with their peers. They will take feedback and incorporate it into their work.

**Editing:** Students will use their knowledge of the conventions of writing to check for correct spelling and sentence structure. They will underline words they think need to be spelled correctly.

**Final Copy/ Publishing:** Students will then copy their piece onto publishing paper. They will use their best handwriting for published pieces. Students will also draw a picture to go with their writing.

**6+1 Traits of Writing:** Writing in first grade will also focus on the six traits of writing.

1. *Ideas and content:* "This is the heart of my message; my writing is full of the kinds of details that keep the reader's attention and show what is really important about my topic."
2. *Word choice:* "I picked just the right words for just the right places."
3. *Voice:* "My paper has lots of personality. It sounds different from the way anyone else writes."
4. *Organization:* "I've chosen an order that works well and makes the reader want to find out what's coming next."
5. *Sentence Fluency:* "The sentences in my paper are clear and delightful to read aloud."
6. *Conventions:* "There are few errors in my paper. It wouldn't take long to get this ready to publish."
- + 1. *Presentation:* "My paper has an illustration, is neat and ready to display."

**Handwriting:** Proper formation of letters and spacing of letters are taught following the manuscript style of writing. Proper handwriting is encouraged in all work.

**Conventions and Grammar:** Students will be introduced to the parts of speech of the English language (nouns, verbs, adjectives), punctuation marks (possessives; commas in a series, date, greeting and closing of a letter; quotation marks; end marks including period; exclamation point and question mark), proper nouns, and capitalization at the beginning of sentences.

**Mathematics:** McGraw Hill/SRA: *Everyday Math, Math Boxes*;  
Creative Publications: *Problem Solvers 1*

Mathematics in first grade exposes students to the world of numbers. Mathematical thinking is an unfolding process and develops individually with each child. Through a hands-on concrete approach, students will develop their ability to:

- Problem solve in everyday situations which develops critical thinking.
- Practice basic skills through ongoing routines and mathematical games.
- Revisit topics regularly to ensure full concept development.
- Explore a wide variety of mathematical content and apply their basic fact skills to geometry, measurement and algebra.
- Think visually, make connections between ideas, see patterns and make estimates.

They develop a true understanding of number sense and are ready to tackle many concepts such as:

**Numeration:** Students count, read and write numbers, investigate place-value of whole numbers, explore fractions and money, and identify greater, lesser, equal, odd and even numbers.

**Operations:** Students learn addition and subtraction facts, memorize basic facts, fact families, and extended facts, begin informal work with properties of numbers such as adding ten to any number, using fact shortcuts (doubles, neighbors, fast 10's and fast 9's), and adding and subtracting 2-digits without regrouping.

**Measurement and Reference Frames:** Students use tools to measure length, capacity, and weight; they use clocks, calendars, timelines, thermometers, and ordinal numbers.

**Data and Chance:** Students collect, organize and display data, using tables, charts and graphs; they explore the concept of chance.

**Geometry:** Students explore, identify and draw a variety of 2- and 3-dimensional shapes.

**Patterns, Functions and Algebra:** Students explore attributes, patterns, sequences, relations, and functions; they find missing numbers and rules in "Frames-and-Arrows" and "What's My Rule?" problems and study properties of operations.

**Using the Problem Solver:** Students learn step-by-step strategies to become confident in tackling more complex problems. Strategies include: act it out/use objects, make a picture, make a table, make a list, guess & check, look for a pattern, work backwards, use logical reasoning, make it simpler, and brainstorm.

## Library & Technology

**Library:** First graders visit the library once a week to learn about different forms of literature, and different ways books are categorized. They also learn responsibility and care for books.

**Technology:** Once a week, first graders go to the computer lab to build their technology skills and complete projects using various software programs. The projects will be integrated with other curriculum such as writing and math. Students become familiar with the basic operation of the computer.

## Personal Safety Curriculum

The personal safety curriculum for grades K-3 focuses on teaching children basic skills designed to help them keep safe from dangerous or abusive situations. In grades 1-3, lessons include walking safety, fire safety, and gun safety. A unit on touching safety emphasizes the positive aspects of touch in children's everyday lives. A unit on assertiveness and support seeks to increase children's ability to stand up for themselves in an assertive, but not aggressive, way and to ask for help in difficult, uncomfortable, or dangerous situations.

## Social Studies: Rand McNally: *Storypath - Families in Their Neighborhoods*

Themes for Social Studies are drawn from and enhance other subject areas. Units include:

**Australia:** Students study Australia's land, history, animals, and their Indigenous people—the Aborigines.

**Maps and Globes:** Students recognize globes and maps, and identify major bodies of water and land, cardinal directions, poles, equator, and map symbols; students design simple physical maps.

**Symbols of the USA and Famous Americans:** Students will begin to understand history and chronology by examining Famous Americans and their influence on the US. Students will also look at select Symbols of the USA to understand their historical context.

**Families and Friends:** Students learn that Family life is shaped by the environment in which they live and the choices that they make. Students study how Families work together, discover their varied traditions, and see how these Families function in the community. Students practice interpersonal and classroom relationships by making quality choices, taking personal responsibility, and resolving conflicts in the classroom and on the playground.

## Specialists

First graders also meet with specialists:

- Art:** 45 minutes — once a week
- Music:** 30 minutes — twice a week
- PE:** 30 minutes — twice a week
- Technology:** 45 minutes — once a week

## Physical Education

*First grade students will develop loco motor and manipulative skills and begin to develop a physical education vocabulary.*

**Fitness Concepts:** Students participate in and enjoy fitness games and activities that promote cardiovascular fitness, strength, and flexibility. They develop a fitness vocabulary.

**Movement Experiences:** Students participate in and enjoy games and activities that develop basic movement and manipulative skills. They develop a vocabulary for movement and manipulative skills (i.e. run, skip, gallop, throw).

**Responsibility:** Students follow rules and use equipment safely. They demonstrate cooperation and sportsmanship in individual and group activities, and develop a positive sportsmanship vocabulary.

## Science: Foss

Science curriculum in first grade builds on the kindergarten curriculum. Units of study include:

**Force and Motion:** Students understand that a push or pull is a force on an object and that gravity can also act on objects. Students will conduct experiments to see how objects move using the basic principles of the scientific method.

**Solar System and Universe:** Students study the sun, moon and stars and observe that these objects have different patterns of movement. Students study the atmosphere and the water cycle.

**Life Cycle:** Students study how parts of organisms work together by studying the Human Body, the Life Cycle of Frogs and Apples. Students study external body parts as well as important organ systems in the Human Body. Students explore through Life Cycles of Apples and Frogs that organisms have certain needs and depend on the other systems for life.

## Art

The Art curriculum in first grade will focus on a different art element each month (based on the art objectives developed by the State of Washington). Students study one or two artists monthly, examining how they use the art element in focus. Students use collage, drawing, paper maché, mosaic, sculpture, painting and additional projects to encourage creativity and skill building.

Elements of Art examined include:

**Line:** identifying types of lines and using types of lines to make designs and compositions.

**Shape/Form:** exploring various shapes and recognizing shapes that overlap.

**Pattern:** using repetition to create a simple pattern.

**Color:** identifying warm and cool colors, and making secondary colors by mixing primary colors.

**Space:** incorporating the edges of the composition to add visual interest.

**Texture:** exploring surface qualities.

## Music

- The elements of music taught in first grade include Beat, Rhythm, and Form.
- Students learn to play simple percussion and Orff instruments.
- Students participate in movement activities with form and creativity.
- Students sing and listen for beat and repeated rhythms and melodies.
- Students compose and perform simple rhythmic creations.