



GRADE TWO 2009-2010

The second grade program seeks to enable students to become independent thinkers while building and expanding basic skills acquired in previous grades. Personal growth in resourcefulness, self-motivation, and independence are overarching goals of the year. Students gain confidence in problem solving in all areas. Second graders learn how to express their ideas clearly in writing and discourse. Active listening and greater organizational skills are taught and practiced. Students continue to practice kindness and responsibility in the social arena. Second graders learn to appreciate differences. Through partner and group work, second graders learn how to cooperate with each other to achieve common goals.

The typical day for second graders begins with journal writing, followed by reading and language arts activities. The rest of the morning is comprised of math, music, and French. Silent reading follows lunch. Science, social studies, art, and PSD are scheduled in the afternoon.

READING AND LANGUAGE ARTS: Second grade has a literature-based reading program. Some of the class selections are: *Tornado* (Byers), *Shoeshine Girl* (Bulla), *The Beast in Ms. Rooney's Room* (Giff), *Hawk, I'm Your Brother* (Baylor), *The Courage of Sarah Noble* (Dalgliesh), *Superfudge* (Blume), *The Chocolate Touch* and *Sarah, Plain and Tall* (MacLachlan).

The second grade is using the *Modern Curriculum Press* and *Steck-Vaughn* series for the phonics and spelling programs. Spelling words are also drawn from the books the students are reading as well as commonly used words from their writing. Writing and spelling are an integral part of the reading program. Second graders write creative stories, poems, descriptions, and factual reports. Emphasis is placed on spelling, punctuation, and handwriting as well as developing clear, descriptive writing. In the latter part of the year, the children are introduced to cursive writing. Students use the "process" approach to writing. They draw on their own life experiences to create meaningful and imaginative stories. Their writing progresses through six stages: brainstorming, rough draft, conferencing, revising, editing, and final copy. Second graders learn keyboarding skills through the "Mavis Beacon" and "All Star Typing Soccer" programs.

MATHEMATICS: In the second grade, an understanding of mathematical concepts is developed through the use of manipulatives and broad application. Activities include sorting, classifying and counting a variety of objects, weighing and measuring in units, telling time, dividing a shape or a group of objects into parts or fractions, comparing shapes and sizes of objects, and studying patterns. Attribute and pattern blocks, Cuisenaire rods, Unifix cubes, meter sticks, rulers, scales, tangrams and math games are used for concept development. Mathematical operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division are performed on real materials before they are encountered as abstract exercises. The second grade uses *Everyday Mathematics* by the University of Chicago School Mathematics Project.

SOCIAL STUDIES: Second graders study physical geography throughout the year. This includes studying continents and oceans and learning basic mapping skills. This year we will do a cultural study on the countries of Central Asia: Afghanistan and Pakistan. We will investigate what life is like for a typical 8-year old child. Food, customs, climate, and



schooling are some of the areas that we will be investigating. Examining similarities and differences between our culture and others will foster greater understanding and appreciation of people from different areas of the world. This unit will create an opportunity for a community service project that will aid the children of Central Asia. Second graders learn history through a yearlong study on Colonial America. We begin our study with the Pilgrims in the 1600s and end with the Revolutionary War and the birth of our nation. We will use history and literature books, as well as the Internet, to enhance our study of the 18th century. We will focus on the Founding Fathers and the Declaration of Independence. A trip to Plimouth Plantation in the Fall and a day in the one-room schoolhouse at Historic Deerfield in the late spring are some of the activities of our history unit.

SCIENCE: The science program for second graders is a yearlong study of animals in their ecosystems. In the fall second graders start the year with a unit on Birds of Prey. The connection between form and function is stressed. Students explore the world of hawks and owls, learn about migration, and discover some basic principles of aerodynamics. A hike up Putney Mountain during peak hawk migration and a trip to The Vermont Institute of Natural Science are field trips that we take during the fall. In the winter months we study Vermont Mammals. We learn about adaptations for survival and how animals cope with the cold winters of New England. Tracking, camouflage and investigations in insulation are some of the topics we study. Students write a research report on a particular Vermont mammal. In the Spring second graders will work with first graders on an astronomy unit. We will explore our solar system, learn about stars and other celestial bodies, and discover our planet's place in the universe. Mathematical connections, a meteor hunt, and a brief study of the mythology of some ancient civilizations are part of this unit. We will visit a planetarium as a culminating activity. Over the course of the year students keep a tree journal that heightens their sensitivity to environmental changes through direct observation. The journal consists of poetry and drawings that document seasonal changes, as well as skill development and personal growth in each student.

ART: Second graders begin the year exploring color and investigating the relationship between light and color. Primary colors, secondary colors, and complementary colors are introduced. Art activities are done in a variety of media such as clay sculpture, painting, collage, and sketching, printing and three-dimensional constructions. Children ponder texture, line, color and form. Many art activities and projects are connected to content areas. We look at the work of Sonia Delauney as we create our own geometrical designs. Georges Seurat and Maurice Pendergast will represent the technique of pointillism. Second graders have an extended art period every week with William Chambers, the professional art teacher at TGS.

STUDIO ART: In grade two art continues to be integrated in the classroom as part of the everyday learning experience. In addition, the class has art in the art room once per week for a longer time than previous years. Students continue to gain from exposure to new materials and begin to create more complex pieces that include more steps and often combine media. They are interested in process and product and can begin to make art that ties directly to their own learning and place in the world. The Mexican muralists and Impressionism and several great masters are studied in these grades.



FRENCH: We will be working with a book called *Grenadine* that comes with a CD and a writing workbook. The book is structured to work on units that incorporate a song, phonetic activities, games, and reading and writing, all built around a body of vocabulary. Topics reviewed and covered will be greetings, possessions, colors, the alphabet, activities, food, days of the week, clothing, months, homes, telling time, and families. Additionally, the new language series, *Qtalk*, which employs pictures as a mechanism to promote oral proficiency, will be used to get students speaking more in class. The second and third grades will combine to meet in two multi-age groups, each group meeting two times a week for forty-five minutes, in the French room.

MUSIC AND TECHNOLOGY: The music program is an integral part of the TGS curriculum with all students in K-8 having three music classes per week. The primary goals are: developing an appreciation for music; singing on-pitch; reading music and playing an instrument; dancing cooperatively; taking direction and performing on stage. Basic computer skills and an introduction to music technology are also important components of the program. Students work in groups, individually, and with several faculty members throughout the year in different learning situations.

TECHNOLOGY: The computer program in the second grade is designed to familiarize the student with the computer and the use of the keyboard as well as various programs that reinforce reading, math, and critical thinking skills. The math programs are made available during free times or math choice times. Students will practice keyboarding skills for approximately 15 minutes, twice a week. The objective for second grade is to learn finger placement, the space bar, delete, and shift keys. Second graders will use bookmarked web sites on the Internet to find information for their research reports.

STUDY SKILLS: In second grade, students are assigned approximately 30 minutes of homework on Monday through Thursday nights. This includes 20 minutes of reading aloud or silent reading on their own. A short spelling, phonics, or math assignment is generally given in addition to the reading assignment. Students will occasionally have a writing assignment to work on at home.

SOCIAL CURRICULUM: The social curriculum at TGS is designed to complement the academic curriculum and help maintain a healthy social and learning environment. We define a healthy school community as a place where people have a sense of belonging, where adults and students extend and receive respect in their relationships with each other, and where people feel both a sense of support and personal challenge to help them learn and grow as human beings. We work on important community skills such as cooperation, team building, personal and social responsibility, active listening, emotional literacy, respect for diversity, conflict resolution, and problem solving.

LIBRARY: The second graders will meet in the library two periods a week to choose books and to do various activities designed to help them become familiar with and comfortable in using the library. They will learn the difference kinds of literature, the difference between fiction and nonfiction, be able to recognize the title and author of a book, practice listening skills, and practice finding books shelved by literature type. As part of the Red Clover Award program, they will learn to evaluate literary material by text, illustration, and information. They will also learn basic skills of research using indexes, encyclopedias, and the Internet. Second graders will use bookmarked web sites on the Internet to find information for their research reports.



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PHYSICAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT: The second graders work daily on developing physical skills. Activities range from organized soccer games, to hiking through the woods, to new games and relays with the K-1 classes. In the winter, the second graders cross-country ski with the rest of the school. Spring sports include whiffleball, kickball and soccer. All these activities develop physical awareness, strength and endurance, flexibility, balance, cooperation, listening skills, and team sports. Throughout the year, students will work on personal fitness goals through the Presidential Challenge.