

Your Child's First Grade Experience

First grade is a year of rapid development and learning, one of the truly pivotal years in your child's education.

Reading

Our nationally-known Fountas and Pinnell guided reading program and small classes offer children the opportunity to read and progress at their individual levels, whether grade level or beyond.

Reading Goals:

- Identify story parts and sequence
- Use reading strategies to increase fluency
- Recognize and understand comparison, inference, main idea
- Classify literature types
- Draw conclusions, predict outcomes
- Identify parts of speech
- Use phonemic awareness skills to decode words
- Read and spell basic sight words
- Demonstrate comprehension through oral and written response
- Read with fluency at grade level or beyond

Book Buddies: Your child is paired with an older student who becomes reading partner, role model and friend.

Portfolio Party: Work that shows your child's development in reading (including audio recordings), writing, math and art is selected and displayed at a special end-of-the-year party for parents.

Celebrating Poetry: First graders learn one poem each week.

Phonics Goals:

Recognize:

- Beginning and ending consonant sounds
- Short and long vowel sounds
- Consonant clusters and digraphs; double consonants
- Suffixes, diphthongs

Writing Goals:

Overall Goal: Write three to eight sentences on a given topic with correct punctuation and spelling

- Recognize that every sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with a punctuation mark
- Write dictated sentences
- Practice prewriting, create first draft, edit, confer with teacher, create final copy
- Illustrate stories

Daily Journal: Your child keeps a daily journal that follows a skill progression from the beginning to the end of the year.

Spelling Goals:

- Recognize all consonant sounds, beginning, medial and ending
- Recognize long and short vowel sounds
- Identify how many syllables in words
- Spell root words before adding endings
- Recognize rhyming words or word families
- Use study method: See the word. Say the word. Spell the word. Write the word. Check the word.

Listening and Speaking Skills Goals:

- Sit and listen to story
- Answer and recall questions
- Follow three directions given at once
- Ask questions, comment and stick to the subject being discussed
- Wait to be recognized before speaking
- Speak so all can hear
- Speak in complete sentences
- Express ideas orally

Star of Week: Your child is the center of attention for a week with photos displays and an opportunity for your family to share stories.

Math Goals:

- Understand the meanings, uses and representations of numbers
- Understand the systems and processes of measurement
- Compute accurately
- Make reasonable estimates
- Understand meanings of operation
- Investigate characteristics of two-and three-dimensional geometric shapes
- Apply transformations and symmetry in geometric shapes
- Select and create appropriate graphical representations of collected or given data
- Analyze and interpret data
- Understand and apply basic concepts of probability
- Understand patterns and functions
- Use algebraic notation to represent and analyze situations and structures
- Progress through levels of math facts testing

Math Olympics: First graders represent a country, join in the colorful Parade of Nations, then visit various "countries" to participate in math games.

Science:

Curriculum alternates with 2nd Grade

Science Goals (Even Year):

- Use experiments to explore the properties of solids, liquids and gases
- Learn the basics of magnets and how they work
- Demonstrate how simple machines help us do work
- Investigate the circulatory, respiratory, skeletal and nervous systems

Science Goals (Odd Year):

- Read and understand weather instruments; thermometers, anemometers, radiometers
- Learn how plants grow and get food
- Study fun facts about planets and use a mnemonic to remember the planets in order
- Become a "dinosaur detective", describe how fossils are made, learn how dinosaurs are named, explore the mystery of how dinosaurs became extinct

Fahrenheit and Celsius Game: Students use maps to find thermometers hidden outside, then record temperatures in both Fahrenheit and Celsius, and analyze the data.

Technology Goals:

- Become familiar with computer hardware and software
- Develop fine motor skills
- Learn fluid manipulation of the mouse
- Begin exploration of the Internet
- Gain a sense of how computers can be used in learning and life

The Well-Rounded Education

Our resource instructors bring out the best in your child as part of a comprehensive, well-rounded first grade experience.

Spanish : Children become familiar with basic Spanish vocabulary through the study of colors, numbers, days of the week and more.

P.E.: Students continue to learn body control skills and movements that will help further their progress in organized group games. There is an emphasis on sportsmanship and interaction with peers.

Music: Students sing, move, play rhythm instruments, and are introduced to music reading skills, as they learn to appreciate and express themselves through music. Your child will perform in costume at the traditional Halloween Assembly and at the annual Grandparent/VIP Day celebration.

Library: Family Read Night brings students, families and guests to the library to share activities and discussions about a book they've read together.

Art: Students discover the basic elements of art, which are built upon as they move through the years. Every student's work is displayed at the Lower School Art Show.

Parent-Teacher Partnership: Teachers are your partners in ensuring that your child is thriving in first grade. They perform oral and written assessments, as well as informal evaluations, to determine how each student is progressing. The teacher will work with you to make sure your child receives help, encouragement and enrichment based on his or her individual learning needs.

1st Grade Field Trips and Traditions

Class Assembly: You will watch as your child performs with the rest of the class at an all-school assembly. Yearly class assemblies are one of the cornerstones of a Topeka Collegiate education, often cited as a reason our students feel comfortable in front of an audience.

Poetry Tea: In spring, students dress up and invite their families to the elegant Poetry Tea, where each student recites a favorite poem and receives a bound collection of the year's poetry selections. This is a signature first grade event.

Pumpkin Patch and Fall Festival: First graders choose their pumpkins and enjoy a hayrack ride at the pumpkin patch. At the Fall Festival, students estimate, weigh, and measure their pumpkins, make stuffed pumpkins and create leaf prints.

Butterfly Study: First graders observe and write what they see as they study the life cycle of butterflies first hand, raising butterflies from larva.

Study of Penguins: Students read and research during computer lab as well as regular class time and then write an informative paper.

Day of the Child: May brings this celebration of the joys of childhood with games and outdoor fun.