

## Your Child's Second Grade Experience

Our goal is to provide students with a solid academic foundation, furthering their individual growth, delight in discovery, sense of personal responsibility and ability to work in a group, thereby preparing them for a continued rich school experience.

There is a theme for each month around which we structure our reading and writing experiences. Students are provided with a literature-based program composed of listening, speaking, vocabulary, reading and writing.

### Reading Goals:

- Read on grade level with fluency and accuracy
- Demonstrate comprehension through discussion and response activities
- Use meaning, structure, and phonics to decode words
- Read for various purposes (study, research, and pleasure)
- Identify literary genres and story elements

**Highlight:** Your child will be paired with a Book Buddy, an older student who will meet regularly with your second grader for fun activities, becoming a reading partner, friend and role model.

### Writing Goals

- Learn standard English grammar and spelling
- Write sentences, paragraphs, reports, and letters
- Write, edit, and publish stories in Writer's Workshop

**Student Writing:** You will share in your child's writing growth throughout the year as you see writing projects displayed in the hallway. Students research and write a report on a Native American tribe. Students write and illustrate a story that is then published as a hardcover book.

### Math Goals

The math program has three primary goals - an understanding of math concepts, emphasizing students' mathematical experiences and ideas, and the development of accuracy in computational skills through the use of manipulatives and games rather than rote memorization. Because skills are not taught in isolation, the students have a deeper understanding.

- Become adept at communication, connection, and representation of mathematical concepts
- Understand how to solve new problems as they encounter them in cooperative and individual settings
- Understand addition and subtraction strategies
- Understand the concept of multiplication and division
- Measure time to the nearest five minutes
- Count money and give change
- Understand fact families and how they relate to addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division
- Measure distances, area, and perimeter
- Use fractions to describe a part of the whole
- Demonstrate an understanding of place value

**Math Olympics:** In the Math Olympics, second grade students represent a country and join in the colorful Parade of Nations through the school. Students then visit various "countries" or stations, to participate in math activities.

### Science:

*Curriculum alternates with 1st 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 (plant form and function, photosynthesis, carbon dioxide and oxygen cycle)
- 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:

- Understand how computer hardware and software can enhance the learning experience
- Continue exploration of the Internet
- Perform simple search functions and learn how to move information into a document
- Learn beginning keyboarding skills
- Begin using the Microsoft Suite to support classroom themes

### Social Development and Work Habit Goals

Students learn to work with increasing independence on schoolwork. However, cooperation and leadership skills are developed through group learning activities.

- Maintain focus and attention to task
- Follow oral and written instructions
- Solve problems in a group
- Develop independence and self-confidence in academic and classroom settings

**Writer's Workshop:** Students learn confidence and poise in public speaking as they present book reports and stories before their class.

**Class Assembly:** Students memorize and recite lines, learn blocking, and wear costumes as they present a play or other performance onstage for the entire school. Yearly class assemblies are one of the cornerstones of a Topeka Collegiate education, often cited as a reason our students feel comfortable presenting to an audience.

### Evaluations:

Teachers are your partners in ensuring that your child is successful in second 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.

## The Well-Rounded Education

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

**Spanish:** Children become familiar with basic Spanish vocabulary through the study of colors, numbers, days of the week, months of the year, transportation, family, Latin American poetry and rhymes, music and songs.

**P.E.:** Students learn to increase strength and agility through certain activities and games. Sportsmanship is taught, with an emphasis on the rules of games and fairness in all competition.

**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:** Students visit twice a week to become familiar with basic library skills, check out books, and to enjoy reading activities based on classroom themes. Family Read Night brings students, families and guests to the library to share activities and discussions about a book they've read together.

**Art:** Once a week, 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.

## 2nd Grade Field Trips and Traditions

**Solar System/Outer Space:** Children explore the solar system, learn about the planets, participate in a math estimation simulation called Project Polaris, build a model space station, and launch homemade rockets.

**Native Americans:** Students learn about Native Americans, particularly those tribes with ties to our state's history.

**One-room Schoolhouse/Pioneers:** Students participate in a one-room schoolhouse simulation. Through a variety of projects and scenarios, children learn what life was like for their counterparts in the 1850s. The unit ends with a graduation celebration including poetry recitation, song and dance. A field trip to the Kansas History Museum allows the children to experience one-room schoolhouse education first-hand. This is a signature second grade event.

**Other Cultures/Other Lands:** Children explore the cultures and geography of a variety of countries around the world, then invite their parents to join them for a Feast of Nations.

**Castles and Dragons:** Students read about dragons in a variety of children's literature. They explore the difference between eastern and western dragons in literature. A trip to the Nelson Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City allows them to compare dragons in art from Asia and Europe.

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