

# The American School in London

## Grade 1: Semester 1 Curriculum Guide

By the end of the first reporting period, these are the ideas, concepts, and skills your child will have learned. We acknowledge that all children learn at different paces, and that it takes the students different lengths of time to master skills and concepts. Your child's teacher will update you on their initial social, emotional, and academic progress at October conferences and provide a more formal report card in February.

### Approaches to Learning

Social skills and emotional development are essential for success. Grade 1 students create classroom agreements that support being respectful, responsible, and safe. Children develop new friendships, resolve conflicts constructively, and interact cooperatively with peers and appropriately with adults. Children are encouraged to be attentive listeners, participate in class discussions, and make relevant responses.

### Reading

Grade 1 students acquire and apply literacy skills through a balance of small group guided reading lessons, shared reading experiences, and independent reading of just right books. Children are encouraged to read fiction and nonfiction text with fluency, expression and increased comprehension. By the end of January in Grade 1, we expect most students to be reading books between the orange and purple bands in the LS Library, independently reading between Fountas and Pinnell levels G-H.

### Writing

Our writing approach emphasizes creativity, building confidence in writing, and developing fluency. Children are given the opportunity to write, revise, edit, publish, and share both fiction and nonfiction pieces. We emphasize the connection between writing and phonological awareness through the study of letters, sounds, and words. This practice enables children to take risks in spelling. Children develop their handwriting skills by practicing proper letter formation and spacing.

### Speaking and Listening

In Grade 1, we expect our students to learn, practice and model effective communication skills. The students are given many opportunities to express their ideas, new understandings, and feelings. Active listening and speaking are encouraged every day.

### Math

The Grade 1 math curriculum is based on the Common Core State Standards to develop students' conceptual understanding of key ideas and mathematical reasoning and problem solving skills. This semester, students deepen their understanding of number and data. They also further their exploration of operations, computation and measurement. Students play games individually and in cooperative groups and use manipulatives to solidify their conceptual understanding. They are encouraged to use a wide variety of tools and strategies to solve problems and explain their thinking.

## **Social Studies**

Grade 1 students develop an understanding of their community and the world around them. In social studies, students learn about the school community, interviewing and observing those who help and support others at the school.

## **Science**

In science, Grade 1 students participate in inquiry-based projects related to light and sound. Emphasis will be placed on asking questions to plan and conduct investigations into cause and effect. Students will apply engineering practices to design and construct a device to communicate over distances.

## **Art**

Grade 1 students are introduced to a variety of art techniques, art mediums and purposes in creating art. They learn about the elements of art starting with Line, exploring how lines can be used for creating patterns and design as well as in creating more recognizable forms in life drawing exercises. Other elements such as Shape, Color and Form are introduced through the study of artists, which helps to inspire students' own creative expression. Students attend two, 50-minute classes every eight days.

## **Music**

Grade 1 students develop their singing skills and pitch awareness through a variety of songs and singing games. They consolidate their understanding of the difference between their speaking and singing voices and develop their ability to pitch specific notes in their voice. In preparation for a Winter Concert, students learn several songs that utilize movement, or instrumental parts. Students are introduced to basic rhythmic notation and start using a reduced stave to read and write simple melodic patterns. They develop confidence in keeping a steady beat when listening to music, using body percussion, or untuned percussion instruments. Students learn about a variety of instruments and explore musical character. Students attend three, half hour lessons every eight days.

## **PE**

Grade 1 students practice how to move safely in personal and general space. They explore skipping, hopping, jumping, catching and balancing through individual and group games. Problem solving, risk taking and decision making skills are reinforced, as are respect and empathy. Students attend half hour classes every other day.

## Spanish

Grade 1 students develop an understanding of basic Spanish through the exposure to authentic language and the culture of the Spanish speaking world. Students participate in activities involving movement, music, manipulatives and games where instruction is given in Spanish. Listening skills are at the center of the learning, while speaking may start to appear as short answers to basic language prompts. The program covers basic vocabulary for greetings, feelings, numbers, colors, school, family, rooms in the house, food, body parts, clothes and animals. Students attend three, half hour lessons every eight days.