

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 interact 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 One, 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 to 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, students participate in inquiry-based projects related to life science. Emphasis is placed on asking relevant questions, making predictions, observations, investigations, and explanations based on recorded information.

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 and techniques 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. Students learn to echo short melodies as a group and grow in confidence pitching notes independently. 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 movement, music and interactive games. Routines are conducted in Spanish incorporating basic vocabulary including numbers, colors, days of the week, the alphabet and feelings and units are designed to enable students to use vocabulary for meaningful and authentic purposes. Students learn about school life, family, food, body parts, clothes and animals. Spanish lessons are intended to raise awareness of how language works as a dynamic means of communication rather than an academic area of study. Students attend three, half hour lessons every eight days.