

SECOND GRADE

Second graders are wide-eyed learners with a willingness to take risks and a ready sense of humor. As learners they are beginning to focus so that information becomes more than mere facts; it begins to be an application tool. Reading and writing become more than skills; they begin to be windows into knowledge. In mathematics, symbolic reasoning begins to complement more concrete manipulations. Throughout the year there is movement toward independence: taking charge of materials and assignments, setting goals and standards for the quality and scope of learning; and monitoring social behaviors.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS:

HOMEWORK Homework is an extension of classroom work. It is the child's responsibility to set aside time for home practice and the parents'/guardians' responsibility to see that this is accomplished. Homework is expected, on average, to take 20 minutes per session. In addition, students are expected to read at home regularly.

Homework is designed not only to reinforce skills and concepts, but also to communicate to families progress made through the curriculum. Should a child choose to do additional activities, monthly extensions are provided. Likewise, homework expectations are modified to be developmentally appropriate for individual students.

EFFORT Whether learning comes easily or with difficulty, achievement is won through effort. We want our second grade students to understand what is meant by effort, to value it, and to discover that process often is as interesting and important as product.

LEARNING STYLE Each child has his or her own learning style and timetable for growth. Just as we do not expect that all children will develop physically at the same time, so too we do not expect academic development to be simultaneous among second grade students. Our program has been designed to accommodate these natural differences in meaningful ways. Where it is necessary, teachers will tailor assignments to match student needs.

RISKS, MISTAKES, AND ACCURACY We encourage students to take risks in their learning and to understand that making honest mistakes often provides opportunities for real learning. Correct answers are important in some situations, but being able to explain reasoning, discover alternatives to solve problems, and to ask incisive questions are often equally important. We encourage our students to place a high value on thinking and reflection.

PORTFOLIOS Second graders use a "progress-folio" system in which various assessments and papers are saved to be sorted through regularly. As children look back through their own work they are encouraged to reflect on their progress, to articulate what makes one paper "better" than another, and to set goals for themselves in future tasks. Through this model, children begin to experience ownership and take responsibility for the quality of their work.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS Report cards are sent home two times a year. Conferences will be scheduled twice during the year. Teachers are also available whenever clarification is needed on an issue involving a child's education. While phone calls and email messages will be returned as soon as possible, parent/guardians are reminded that

teaching duties and other responsibilities make instantaneous communication impossible. Newsletters from the classroom will be sent by home folders and/or email periodically throughout the year.

SOCIAL COMPETENCY CURRICULUM

As one component of developing a supportive and nurturing classroom environment, Pine Hill School teachers present “Open Circle” lessons twice a week for fifteen minutes, throughout the school year. Open Circle, The Social Competency Curriculum, created by staff at The Stone Center, Wellesley College, is designed to develop and improve the interpersonal skills of children in order to further their social and academic growth. Research has shown that when children have strong social skills, they are able to develop better relationships and their learning is enhanced. The curriculum features three sections of lessons designed to:

- Create a cooperative classroom environment
- Build self-esteem and positive relationships
- Solve people problems

Our students are asked to apply the lessons they are learning, then reflect upon and share the effects of their new skills in subsequent Open Circle meetings.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Our academic program closely follows the Massachusetts Frameworks, which promote thinking and communicating, gaining and applying knowledge, and working and contributing.

LANGUAGE ARTS

Reading

Reading, writing, listening, speaking and thinking are interrelated and interdependent components of a balanced language arts program. Literature is the foundation of the reading program. Second graders are exposed to different forms of literature including fiction (realistic fiction, fantasy, folktale, fairy tale, fable, and legend), non-fiction (biography, autobiography, and informational text), poetry, and drama. There is a strong emphasis on the direct teaching of comprehension skills and concepts. Students will develop knowledge and understanding of literary elements. These skills are then practiced through reading followed by oral and written responses. In addition, phonetic skills are reinforced in a direct, systematic, multi-sensory way, and build upon prior knowledge of decoding (reading) and encoding (spelling) strategies. In reading workshop students will experience guided literature conversations, whole class mini-lessons, shared-reading discussions, and read aloud time. In order to meet the needs and interests of every individual we provide a balance between shared class reading of texts, small group reading, and independent reading.

Guided reading techniques and strategies will continue to be a part of the second grade reading workshop. Guided reading, which is based on the work of Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell, involves small group instruction for students. The group is often homogeneous, including

students who read at about the same level, demonstrate similar reading comprehension skills, and share similar instructional needs. In the small group the teacher introduces a selected text and explicit strategies are taught. Through a combination of oral and silent reading, the child then practices and builds fluency and comprehension skills at his/her own instructional level.

Writing

The writing program integrates the writing workshop model advocated by Lucy Calkins and her colleagues from the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project.

Writing units of study will focus on different genres, including personal narrative, nonfiction, poetry, and fiction. Students will learn about the characteristics of each genre by reading and studying mentor texts. Through whole class mini lessons, small group instruction, and individual conferences, students will receive explicit instruction on essential writing strategies and skills.

In addition to previously mastered skills, by the end of the year students will also be expected to appropriately utilize apostrophes in contractions and possessives, use complete sentences, and write stories with a beginning, middle, and end using a clear sequence of events. To achieve fluency in writing, children are encouraged to use inventive or temporary spelling as needed, although they will be held accountable in final drafts for certain grade-level appropriate core words. Demanding perfection during the early stages of writing tends to inhibit ideas.

Spelling and Phonics

Learning to spell correctly is an important part of second grade. Methods from Foundations are used with second graders to achieve this goal. Foundations systematically and comprehensively instructs students in phonemic awareness and word study and contributes greatly to fluency, vocabulary development and the applications of strategies for understanding text.

MATHEMATICS

Second grade mathematics is a multi-sensory program. We want our students to be able to recognize mathematical patterns and relationships, to interpret information, to make reasonable decisions and to solve increasingly complex problems using various mathematical approaches and tools. Second graders use journals, activity books, and many manipulative materials to enhance their learning.

Throughout the school year, the children have many opportunities to explore, learn, practice, and review the following concepts: spatial relationships, money, place value, time, patterns, measurement, estimation, number sense, addition and subtraction (with and without regrouping), fractions and spatial relationships, multiplication, and division. The *Everyday Math Program*, designed by the University of Chicago School Mathematics Project, is based upon a simple philosophy:

- children can learn much more than is usually expected of them
- mathematics means more when it is rooted in real-life problems and situations
- children's mathematical knowledge should grow from what they know

The teachers' role is to build students' self-confidence as learners in mathematics, to nurture students' natural curiosity, to challenge students with rich problems through which they will come to value mathematics, to provide a strong foundation for further study, and to draw out mathematical power and ability. We emphasize thinking, understanding, reasoning, and being able to explain "how we got the answer."

Everyday Math units include: Routines and Assessments; Addition and Subtraction Facts; Place Value, Money, and Time; Mental Arithmetic: Additions and Subtraction; 3-D and 2-D Shapes; Review and Extension of Whole-Number Operations; Patterns and Rules; Fractions; Measurement; Decimals and Place Value; Whole-Number Operations Revisited; Year-End Reviews and Extensions. By the end of the year, most second graders should have memorized the addition and subtractions facts up through twenty and be able to use that knowledge to solve word problems.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Our emphasis in social studies is on people living in communities. Second graders learn about different social functions that contribute to community life. These include how goods and services are produced, how rules help people live together, and how the actions of individuals and groups help to shape our rules and laws.

Traditions and values of communities are explored, as well as the contributions of individuals from diverse backgrounds. A study of some of the first inhabitants of this land, the Wampanoag People, is taught using a seasonal focus. By studying a Wampanoag Village of long ago throughout the year, our students learn to compare and contrast how this community and other communities have met basic human needs. In addition, the students study the Pilgrims, their origins, and their role in the development of our country. Meaningful first-hand experiences, problem solving, role-playing, and hands-on activities will help students learn about themselves, their community, and the world beyond.

During the Countries of Origins unit, second graders research the countries of their family origins and share their discoveries with their classmates. In geography, students continue to work with maps and the globe, identifying earth's features, strengthening their understanding of map symbols and expanding on their ability to draw simple maps. By the end of the year, they should be able to name and locate the continents and the oceans, as well as the rivers, mountains, and mountain ranges specified by the MA Frameworks.

SCIENCE

Through the study of science topics, second grade students learn about the everyday world in which they live. The children observe, explore, question, and hypothesize. Students collect and organize information in an orderly way and ask questions from manipulative experiences they have. They also learn that there are unanswered questions about the world they live in and that one of the roles of the scientist is to search for these answers.

Second grade students also will explore the three states of matter: solids, liquids, and gases. Through a variety of observations and hands-on experiences, the students will make predictions and test their hypotheses about the properties of matter.

With the help of a Broadmoor Sanctuary naturalist and parent volunteers, students are involved in a life science unit in which they study a vernal pool throughout the school year, gathering data on its size, temperature, and animals. They learn about salamanders and other amphibians, and will focus on comparing the characteristics of frogs and toads. They develop knowledge of specific environmental themes: life cycles, food chains, animal adaptations, animal classification, and the process of scientific inquiry. The themes surface again in a unit in which the children study tide pool animals. Students closely watch these intriguing animals in their classrooms and record their observations in their science logs.

In an earth science unit that corresponds with a social studies unit on geography, the children learn the earth's features such as mountains, valleys, plains, deserts, ice caps, oceans, rivers, lakes, and marshes.

Students will apply the 5 steps of the engineering process through two different experiences. 1) Ask: what is the problem? 2) Imagine: what are some possible solutions? 3) Plan: draw a diagram; 4) Create: build a prototype; 5) Improve: think of changes to create a better solution. Students will then present their ideas and reflect on the process. This will be accomplished through use of the Museum of Science unit, *To Get To The Other Side; Designing Bridges*. As a conclusion to their study of the Wampanoag, students will apply the five steps of the engineering design process when they create a model of a shelter, from found, natural materials

SPECIALIST PROGRAMS

HEALTH EDUCATION

The health education program, which complements the science curriculum, is a comprehensive health and substance abuse prevention program using *The Great Body Shop* curriculum from the Children's Health Market. The overall goals of the health program are to facilitate understanding of fundamental health concepts and disease prevention. The program encourages students to build respect for and promote the health and well-being of one's self and others. The program also promotes the acceptance of personal responsibility for health-enhancing behaviors and the reduction of health risks. Second grade students participate in a health class two times a month. A health tutor who is funded by the Community School Association leads the classes.

The topics covered in the *Great Body Shop* for second grade students include the following: Safety, the Brain (Central Nervous System), Nutrition, the Heart (anatomy, functions, problems, protection), Babies and How They Grow, Drug Abuse Prevention, Germs, Skin, Muscles and Physical Fitness.

Each topic includes a "Student Issue" from the *Great Body Shop* to be used as family health resource material. A monthly Parent Bulletin suggests family reading materials, helpful family websites, and information directed to parents/guardians.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Second graders continue to practice all movement concepts including direction, balance, level, pathway, range, and force absorption, locomotor and non-locomotor actions, and fundamental game type skills. Added to this level are striking with a racket and batting (T-ball). Activities enhancing physical fitness and wellness, gymnastics, tumbling, and dance (listening and moving to various rhythms) are included in the program.

Social and emotional development skills such as learning the value of teamwork and the need for and importance of cooperation, good sportsmanship, respect, and courtesy are beginning to be emphasized to a greater degree. At this grade level more games associated with sports are introduced. Game rules, safety measures, and simple strategies are also taught.

Second Grade Physical Education Performance Standards

- Demonstrates skills of chasing, fleeing, and dodging to avoid or catch others.
- Rolls smoothly in a forward direction without hesitating or stopping.
- Throws a ball while demonstrating a mature throwing technique.
- Consistently dribbles a ball using hands without losing control.
- Repeatedly jumps a self-turned rope.
- Consistently strikes a ball with a bat from a tee or cone, using the correct grip and side to target.
- Uses feedback to improve performance.
- Experiences and expresses pleasure from participation in physical activity.
- Demonstrates the value of living a healthy lifestyle by engaging in moderate to vigorous physical activity outside of physical education class.
- Uses equipment and space safely and properly.
- Responds positively to an occasional reminder about a rule infraction.
- Displays consideration of others in physical activity settings and treats others with respect.
- Tries new activities.
- Enjoys interaction with friends through physical activity.

TECHNOLOGY CURRICULUM

Second grade students use the computer lab to become comfortable and familiar with technology and to reinforce concepts taught in the classroom including skills in reading, writing, math, social studies, and science. Computers also are an integral part of the classroom, often utilized as another component of the learning centers approach. All classes may also sign up to have the cart of AlphaSmarts in their rooms.

Some examples of second grade software used at Pine Hill include:

- Read, Write & Type
- Interactive Math Journey
- Kid Works Deluxe
- Stationery Studio
- Math Blaster
- Pixie
- River Deep House Series
 - Bailey's Book House

- Millie's Math House
- Trudy's Time & Place
- Sammy's Science House

Students work on the following technology skills:

- Responsible use of technology
- Basic skills for using hardware and software applications
- Practice using two hands on the keyboard
- Use of an application for drawing and painting with technology
- Computerized test taking
- Use of the computer as a tool for learning
- Use of an application tool for organizing information
- Beginning file and print management
- Basic navigation of teacher selected web sites
- Beginning word processing functions
- Beginning presentation skills
- Beginning computer science code

ART CURRICULUM

The art program in second grade expands upon previously introduced skills and concepts concerning lines, shapes, color, balance, texture, pattern, and rhythms. A variety of media are used such as watercolor, tempera paint, markers, pastels, and the manipulation of paper. Three-dimensional projects include the use of clay, wood, cardboard, wire, and "found objects." Simple printmaking and weaving concepts are also taught.

Students in second grade are encouraged to actively use their imaginations and to create their own unique expressions of the art assignment. Respect for each other's artwork and the belief that there is more than one right way or solution to an artistic problem is fostered.

In support of the visual arts curriculum, parent volunteers periodically present "ArtWorks at Pine Hill", an art appreciation lesson and hands-on activity for each class of students.

MUSIC CURRICULUM

The Philosophy of Orff Schulwerk is used in all Pine Hill grades. This philosophy states that music education shall be made available and appealing to every child. The student shall experience successful musical activities that demand total involvement, artistic discipline, creativity, sensitivity and active listening. These activities will lead to development of skills with each of the elements of music - rhythm, melody, harmony, form, and timbre.

In the Orff approach, the development from play through the exploration of musical elements to musical understanding is carefully sequenced. The emphasis is on process rather than performance; on participation by all, each at his/her own level; on developing musical ideas as well as reproducing set forms. Second grade is a time to summarize and synthesize the basic

skills learned in kindergarten and grade one. It is also time to broaden the student's horizons as we perform, create, and respond to music.

The grade two music curriculum is designed to align with the National Standards for Music Education created by the Music Educator's National Conference. These content standards serve as a model to our own Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Framework. These content standards are:

- Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music
- Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music
- Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments
- Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines
- Reading and notating music
- Listening to, analyzing, and describing music
- Evaluating music and music performances
- Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts
- Understanding music in relation to history and culture

Materials are selected to correlate with themes being explored in the classroom as much as possible. The study of songs and dances from around the world during the *Countries of Origin* social studies unit is but one example of curriculum coordination.

LIBRARY CURRICULUM

The Pine Hill Library is open during school hours, and there are many resources available for students and Pine Hill Families to access 24/7 on the [Pine Hill Library website](#). You can find out which books are available in our library, which new books we have and you can learn about our exciting Birthday Book donation program.

One resource that has been created especially for Pine Hill students is [Pine Hill Libguides](#). This website contains enriching, student-friendly videos, web links, and photos that connect directly to our curriculum. You can even watch some informative student created projects!

The two major focus areas of the Pine Hill Library Program are Information and Media Literacy and Love of Reading.

Information and Media Literacy:

A student who is information and media literate:

- Engages in the information literacy process by accessing, evaluating and communicating informational text
- Uses a variety of skills and strategies to comprehend nonfiction and informational text
- Accesses and organizes information and media

Love of Reading:

A student who develops a love of reading:

- Has access to exciting and engaging literature in a comfortable and welcoming learning environment
- Reads for a variety of purposes and across content areas
- Independently reads books and texts each year

The teacher librarian works in collaboration with classroom teachers and the technology teacher to create opportunities for students to learn the skills needed to accomplish these goals. In addition to working collaboratively with students and teachers in the classroom, students attend a scheduled library class. In these classes the teacher librarian continues teaching these focus skills and fostering a love of reading.

Students in grades K- 5 check out books from the library as needed and during their scheduled library classes. Parents may also check out books from the Pine Hill Library. Send an email to the teacher librarian at ryanl@doversherborn.org to have an account created. Volunteers are always welcome as well!