

Second Grade Curriculum

Social Skills/Classroom Management Second graders learn that they are in charge of their behavior and choices throughout our day. I try to make it easier for them to decide to make good choices. (“Your ticket to recess” is getting your work done. “If you play during work time, you will work during play time”.) *Kelso Conflict Management Skills* gives communication strategies to solve problems so that little problems do not become big problems. Big problems are ones where safety or injury may soon or already have occurred. Little problems we can solve on our own without adult intervention. The *Second Steps* curriculum teaches empathy, impulse control/problem solving and managing anger. In *Talk about Touching* kids learn appropriate behaviors on their and others’ part. We are creating a *Positive Catholic School Environment* by being respectful, kind, responsible, and safe.

Religion This is a big sacramental year with our First Reconciliation and Eucharist. Each grade level brings new prayers which are posted on my school webpage. Our *Blest Are We* curriculum has many ways to learn content areas: acting, singing, drawing, reading, rehearsing, whatever we can that makes learning about our faith alive and engaging. The *blestarewe.com* website has chapter reviews you can access at home. It is vitally important that you and your child not only attend mass weekly, but also actively participate in all responses, prayers and actions. We go over the Sunday readings on Friday during what I call “Sunday Summary”. I try to explain the mass readings in kids’ language. When they come to church on the weekend, they will be able to further deepen their understanding of those readings.

Reading: There are ten ways to become a better reader: 1) read 2) read, 3) read, 4), read...

Good readers use effective strategies before, during and after reading. Fluency – the speed at which they read, does not necessarily equate to comprehension. Our strategy emphasis is on phonics and decoding (word attack), predicting and inferring from the text, monitoring and clarifying, questioning, and summarizing and evaluating after reading. If you use these same strategies at home, you will see growth in their reading. We have reading discussions using higher-order thinking questions to get below the surface of what we are reading. There are lots of activity options from which students can choose to further practice reading and writing skills.

Writing is developmental and includes penmanship and spelling. Students will learn and use correct sentence structure, conventions such as capital letters, punctuation, a lot of grammar work and spelling patterns. Penmanship counts in publication, not in free-flow of ideas. We do writing activities for different audiences and purposes: narratives, opinion papers and informational. We write friendly letters to our community service persons and the sick as our social outreach in religion. Our CCSS writing includes opinion, narrative and informational writing over a variety of content areas.

Spelling, like reading and writing, is developmental. We use our HM curriculum with the Fry list of most common words used in kids’ writing. You will get misspelled words each week in their assignment books. Do practice spelling at home. Memorizing for a Friday test doesn’t mean they have learned their spelling patterns if they cannot spell or recognize incorrect spellings of those words in their own connected writing.

Penmanship is the art or style of handwriting. It is important to use good posture, positioning, and the letters in their words show good spacing, size, shape and slant-except when they write on the floor using their clipboards.) Don’t be surprised if their penmanship takes a nose-dive when they start really writing on their own. We want that free-flow of ideas. Legibility will return when they get more experience and confidence in their over-all writing. Please monitor pencil grip at home.

Art: integrated in curricula as well as specific art lessons throughout the year from a docent.

Social Studies: Part is integrated in our basal reading series, most heavily culture and family traditions. We also learn civics (how we work together in our community), history (local-Edmonds), geography (map skills), talk about government and economics of our local area.

Math We are using Singapore Math in all grades, pre-k through 8th grade. Students start their mathematical understanding by using concrete objects to solve problems. From there, we move to models to show our work. They need this experience before the conventional form of writing answers. Throughout their grades, students are expected to draw models to explain their thinking as well as the “answer”. See the Scope and Sequence Excel sheet for highlights of CCSS taught in second grade. I will be sending home parent letters with each new unit.

Science: Second grade studies Matter and Its Interactions, Ecosystems, Biological Evolution, Earth’s Systems and The Earth’s Place in the Universe, all with hands on, guided inquiry. We will have supportive field trips and classroom visitors to enhance our learning. I also do Sciencing™. This is a self-directed exploration and discovery using materials such we collect throughout the year. These are STEM supported projects—very exciting. A few students are selected to share their discoveries and the other “scientists” who then can ask them questions that may lead to further inquiry. They learn to do very sequential writing and showing data, so others can try to replicate their work.

Technology: Students in second grade can identify computer hardware components and manipulate icons, the mouse and the keyboard. We will be integrating technology into what we are learning in the classroom. If someone has a really good question we can Google, we will do so. We can also enter data in math to do surveys, make charts, and draw conclusions visually on spreadsheets. We can publish stories with assistance (dictation). The Promethean whiteboard, overhead projector, microphones, and calculators are also part of the technology we use in school. Second graders even often help me compose emails to parents.

Library (Not to be confused with “Liberry”). Second graders get to check out two books for one week. If they do not read both, they need to at least bring them back so they can be renewed. This is part of their responsibility grade.

Field Trips: We will visit Edmonds Center for the Arts, Yost Park for several Science Inquiries and the Pacific Science Center on a bus!

Grading: For monitoring progress and report cards, we use *Power School*, an on-line program that allows parent to access their child’s grades. Look at the comments box to see what essential learning is to take place. Not all assignments are graded in second grade. There are pre-assessments to determine instruction, assessments while learning to monitor understanding, and assessments of learning at the end of a unit of learning. These last assessments weigh more heavily on the report cards. You will know when these unit assessments are coming up so you can work with your child on the skills taught.

Homework: the purpose is reinforcing and stretching our thinking on learned material, not new material. You will receive information from school and on my website that give you ideas on how to extend the classroom learning at home. Our only homework over weekends is reading and attending Mass. Kids always should also read, read, read. There is an AR reading list on the HR website under Library. Check out Blestarewe.com for religion activities, and lots of free learning activities on line. Share if you find some good ones!

Parties and Birthdays We celebrate Halloween and Valentine’s day in the classroom. For First Reconciliation and Eucharist, a reception is held in the parish hall. For your child’s birthday, you may send treats if you wish for kids to eat at lunch. It is preferable that there are not choices, such as vanilla versus chocolate. Keep it simple. NO FROZEN TREATS. We do our birthday blessing before we go to lunch. Kids and their friends pass out the treats **at lunch**.

Take Home Folders a/k/a Take Home and Bring Back We write our homework in our Student Planner (a/k/a Assignment book) and place any worksheets or instructions in the assignment book. All work is returned in that book. The Take Home folder is for other papers sent home. Some may need to come back but most won't. Their folder should be emptied nightly and returned to their backpack with or without anything in it. Student's books do not go home on Fridays as I do not homework, other than the expectation that over the weekend they are reading and going to mass.

Routines for Take Home Folder and Student Planner. These are to be returned DAILY, with any unfinished work in them. Do not keep work at home as this tends to lead to lost papers and lost opportunities for us to help your child so we know they know the skills being practiced.

Emergency lunches not to be confused with Comfort Kits. Keep those small. We keep the emergency lunches in our small shared cubbies.

Thank you for your support,

Mrs. Boyle