

## First Grade Curricular Summary and Academic Expectations

### Third Quarter (Jan 18 - Mar 21)

Dear Parents,

Below you will find an updated description of the curricular and academic expectations that I have for your child in the third quarter of first grade. It provides some background information that may help you to better understand your child's report card.

The performance of several of our students exceeds the expectations described below. However, if your child is meeting these expectations, they should be well on the road to reading, writing, and solving problems fluently and skillfully.

#### Reading

**In terms of specific reading skills, by the beginning of March in first grade I expect your child to:**

- have learned all the sight words on the pre-primer and primer lists.
- know and apply letter / sound relationships for single letters, pairs of letters (phonograms) like "th" or "er", and simple short and long vowel patterns like "silent e" and vowel pairs.
- sound out regularly spelled words of 4-6 letters smoothly.
- match words they decode or "sound out" to a word they know that makes sense with the story.
- predict words and content as they read.
- be able to use the sense of the story to help them figure out words.
- notice and correct their mistakes when they don't make sense
- begin to verbally identify story elements such as characters, settings or place, and details in stories they have read.

#### Writing

**There are two main areas of writing in which we assess the children: composition/mechanics and ideas.**

- In the area of **composition**, I expect your child to be writing five or more sentences during each writing session which stay on topic, make sense, and use natural vocabulary. All students should be including more details and events as well as using more varied vocabulary.
- In the area of **mechanics**, your child should be developing the use of capitals and periods to start and finish their sentences. Their handwriting should be legible and

- well-spaced. With support, students should begin to look for and correct missed words, capitals, and periods as part of the editing process.
- In the area of **ideas**, your child should be able to usually think of their own ideas for writing rather than asking me to generate one.

## Spelling

**At this time of year, we assess first graders on both their developmental spelling level and their ability to spell a growing number of sight words accurately.**

In the third term of first grade, students should become very proficient in writing down all the sounds that they hear as they write un-learned words. Students should also begin experimenting with and attempting to apply spelling patterns that they encounter in books and lessons such as phonograms, vowel spelling patterns, and common endings like "ed" and "s" or "es". At this time, given the terms we described at the beginning of the year, your child should be a *phonetic* or *transitional* speller.

- *Phonetic* spellers include a letter for every sound in the word they are writing, spelling the word "united" as "unitd".
- In the next stage, *transitional*, children begin to experiment with and apply spelling patterns that they recall from reading. A *transitional* speller may spell the above word "youknighted."
- It is at this stage that they are ready to learn the *conventional* spelling of the word since they are developing a visual understanding of it. They are frequently used, irregular words that they just have to memorize like "of" and "are." As part of that process, students should be able to identify words in their own writing that are misspelled or "don't look right."

Your child is also expected to increase their vocabulary of words they can spell from memory.

## Mathematics

- In the third term our math program has focused on strategies for addition and subtraction, place value, reading and writing 2 and 3 digit numbers, using calculators, understanding and using number grids and number lines, and number comparison. Your child should be very *secure* in all the above skills and concepts to be meeting expectations in mathematics.
- Although the above concepts have been our main focus, I have been introducing several other mathematical concepts. Our program also expects your child to have a *developing* grasp of the following concepts: measurement (standard and metric), geometry, money, story problems, estimating, odd and even numbers, telling time to the minute, reading and writing number sentences and using them in math stories. Instruction in these concepts and skills will be ongoing for the rest of the year.