

**Move to Learn
Global School**

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PRIMARY YEARS Grade 1 CURRICULUM

Overview

In first grade, students begin to develop the underlying skills and knowledge they need in order to move into deeper thinking and questioning. Students are given opportunities to learn and problem solve collectively, as well as individually. Our goal is that children will start to feel responsible for their own learning and behavior.

We believe that all students learn most successfully in a safe, nurturing environment, one in which students care about each other and each other's learning — an environment where students are not afraid to take risks and make mistakes. The curriculum is extended through numerous field trips that utilize the many resources in and around the city such as visiting a Japanese temple/shrine, an Aquarium, Legoland, a Nature Trek, a Farmer's/Fish Market, a Science/Art Museum, Natural History Museum and other Museums, a Theme Park, a zoo, a fishing trip, etc.

Units of Inquiry

The Units of Inquiry examine the concepts of identity, culture, and expression through the arts and poetry, the life cycles of plants and animals, geography, and conservation. Through questioning, hands--on experiments, reading, writing, and other research, students come to construct meaning and understand large themes within each unit. Students analyze their knowledge by thinking about how things function, why they are the way they are, and how and why they may change. They also develop social, communication, reasoning, self--management, and research skills by embarking on larger group projects. They gain knowledge that is relevant and of global significance to develop an appreciation that we hope will lead to international--mindedness. Students strengthen their ability to see things from different perspectives, and reflect upon their own responsibility in the personal choices that they make.

Reading

Students participate in a reading workshop as a part of the balanced literacy framework that is used throughout the school day. Whole group lessons occur regularly, during which students are taught the skills and strategies they need to navigate a variety of genres of books. Students are also split into small groups to work closely with their teachers, giving them the support they need to work towards individualized goals. Students also read independently and are taught how to select books that are appropriate for their skill levels. Teachers assess students periodically throughout the year to determine their progress.

Writing

First grade is an important and exciting year for writing. Students move beyond the mechanics of writing and start to put their own opinions and ideas on paper. They begin to think about the content and quality of their writing by applying their emerging editing skills. During the different units of study, students learn to write for different purposes and across various genres such as poetry, persuasive, expository, and creative writing. Students are also exposed to and start using similes, metaphors, dialogue, and senses in their writing.

Math

Mathematics in the first grade at MTLGS is a year of foundational skills. We begin the year focusing on and conducting a comprehensive review of the basic number facts that students have learned in kindergarten. The topics include counting, place value, and comparing numbers. After a solid review, we move into addition and subtraction. Then students explore geometry and an introduction to fractions. Later in the year, we explore money, measurement, and time. Finally, students learn to organize, compare, and interpret data by using various types of graphs. Throughout the year, we teach our students a variety of strategies for solving number stories. Students use math manipulatives, math games, and different math apps in order to fully understand and explain their thinking.

World Languages

Expansion of English and Japanese

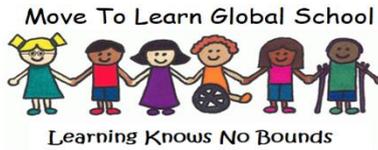
All students in the PYP are required to study both English and Japanese. Learning these languages is seen to be an important element in preparing young people for citizenship in the developing global community.

Students in English and Japanese are exposed to the culture of the target language and develop the necessary skills to become active users of the language at the end of their school career. Students in grades 1--5 learn language through a variety of ways including songs, games, role--playing, and cultural activities.

In first grade, the goal is for students to continue to feel comfortable speaking and hearing English and Japanese. The curriculum focuses on correct pronunciation, various basic themed vocabulary, including numbers, days of the week, month of the year, weather, animals, parts of the body, family, etc.. Students learn how to recognize and write simple, familiar English letters, words and short sentences and Japanese characters, words and short sentences. They learn how to ask for simple information, ask and answer questions, and express themselves in each language. Both foreign and Japanese culture is explored through arts, music, storybooks, and the celebration of various festivals throughout the Year.

Visual Arts

First grade visual arts encourages students to be exploratory, developing their curiosity about art and its affective power for personal and cultural expression. Students explore artworks by a range of significant artists, learning how to sharpen their observational skills and begin to interpret the mood of artworks by analyzing subject matter and visual characteristics of form. They learn to make a range of 2D and 3D artworks by experimenting with different materials and in response to observations, sensory experiences and through imitation. Art-making projects include self-portraits, animal habitats, structures, maps, and found object sculptures. Throughout the year, students have the opportunity to present their artistic talents in Community Meetings, and special assemblies. Art is an integral part of our curriculum and teaching practice.



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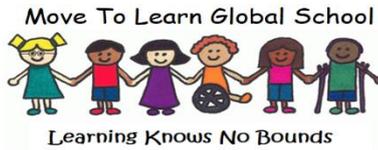
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Music

First graders sing songs in a variety of languages and styles. Students begin to learn and apply the principles of music notation both traditional and nontraditional, sight-reading, and musical ear training. In the instrumental portion of first grade music curriculum, emphasis is made on strengthening and learning of various world and classical rhythms through the use of pitched and unpitched percussion instruments. Students work on their compositions individually and in groups by using basic technology tools and compositional techniques. Special emphasis is made on collaborative and creative projects. Students strengthen their communication and creative thinking skills while exploring percussion instruments, such as African drums, xylophones, and steel drums. The primary goal for the first grade is to allow students to experience the joys of group and spontaneous music making while building their social and collaborative skills. Throughout the year students have the opportunity to present their musical talents in Community Meetings, and special assemblies, and School Presentations.

Physical Education

In the first grade, physical education focuses on teaching students important movement fundamentals related to health, fitness, and well-being of both the body and the brain. Students explore and develop the ability to solve problems individually or in pairs, and begin to identify different roles and responsibilities in small group activities. Students are taught sports specific skills and brain development techniques in a variety of games and movement related activities such as the Move to Learn (Australia) program. Through these games and movement activities students are familiarized with the concepts of brain and body development and coordination, teamwork and cooperation. First grade students are exposed to different stimuli and respond through movement to express feelings and moods using imagination and original ideas. They explore and develop traditional and innovative gymnastic skills and interpret and answer movement tasks by putting simple movement sequences together. Students are made aware of the importance of daily exercise and explore, use, and adapt a range of movement skills. They focus on the connection of "body and exercise" when looking at physical changes in relation to exercising during their interdisciplinary studies.



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Library

Students in first grade are introduced to the library as part of their scheduled classes. They participate in activities that support recognizing the difference between fiction and nonfiction and begin to learn the parts of nonfiction books that are tools for finding information. In addition to print materials, first grade students are introduced to age appropriate digital resources and basic research skills that integrate with our units of inquiry. They also begin to learn the organization of materials within the library. A love of literature and the understanding that the library is a source of information is of primary importance. First graders borrow books from the library and enjoy sharing a variety of fiction and nonfiction stories that support their Units of Inquiry.

Design

First grade students are introduced to the design cycle and technology that complement the Program of Inquiry. A variety of digital tools will be integrated into the classrooms to enhance their units of inquiry. In the beginning of the year, first graders learn how to use technology responsibly and begin to learn basic technology skills. Students also reflect on their own learning process through a digital portfolio.

Students in the first grade will begin to that understand that technology is the process of communicating and sharing information. Students are introduced to coding through floor robots called bee--bots. These programmable robots help students to learn control, sequencing, and directional language. Students use the design inquiry cycle to help solve problems by creating new and imaginative solutions. For example, during the unit, Sharing the Planet, students build recycled envirobots that all play a special role in making sure we keep our earth clean.