

PRIMARY YEARS Grade 2 CURRICULUM

Overview

Second grade at MTLGS provides a strong academic foundation of intellectual and creative pursuits with a focus on ongoing skill development. The language arts curriculum focuses on basic reading, writing, grammar, spelling, penmanship, critical thinking, speaking, and listening. The second grade Units of Inquiry examine the concepts of interdependence, symbology, transformation, expression through stories, movement of people, and healthy choices. Students begin to learn basic research skills, formulating clear questions that highlight their thinking skills, and work collaboratively with a group. Opportunities are provided to encourage children to become active and independent learners. 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

Through the second grade Units of Inquiry, students are guided to ask deeper questions that will lead to richer discussion around the unit topics. Students are also taught to become more proficient at finding answers for themselves by exploring multiple forms of media. There is a strong emphasis on cooperative learning as students use one another and their parents as resources and work as a team to make discoveries.

Our six Units of Inquiry and their central ideas are as follows:

Who We Are – The choices we make affect our health

How We Organize Ourselves – Signs and symbols help organize communities.

How We Express Ourselves – Stories inspire and help guide us.

How the World Works – Natural forces shape the earth.

Where We Are in Place and Time – Human migration, challenges, and opportunities.

Sharing the Planet – Living things are connected.

Reading

Second graders start the year by acclimating to the reading environment of the classroom, as well as developing their independent reading skills. Students consider their strengths and interests when choosing "just right" books, with an increased focus on chapter books. Second graders continue to develop their ability to decode and work on their overall comprehension of various texts. We help them navigate by giving them opportunities to talk about their reading in one-on-one with the teacher, in peer partnerships, and in small groups. Students are encouraged to discuss connections between texts, their own lives, and the world around them. They are also prompted to recognize characters' feelings and challenges while following their journeys through books. As the year continues, second graders read non-fiction books to improve their research skills and comprehension of informational text.

Writing

The students start the year by writing about themselves in their personal narratives. They write about personal experiences, as well as various topics that are of interest to them. Throughout the year, second graders write about things that happen over the weekend, as well as thoughtful reflections at the end of each week. Students learn how to focus on one event and use that knowledge to produce detailed and thoughtful writing pieces. Second graders are given many opportunities to practice using descriptive language, correct writing conventions, and learned skills. They work on these skills through writing autobiographies, historical fiction pieces, persuasive letters, and more. Additionally, they develop a stronger understanding of the writing process by publishing many fiction and nonfiction pieces throughout the course of the year.

Math

In math, students work throughout the year to master their basic addition and subtraction facts. Within each math unit, students develop problem solving abilities through weekly multi-step word problems with a focus on showing and explaining their thinking. Students continue to develop their number sense through an inquiry into place value. Additionally, they learn useful skills for working with money and time, such as making change, and telling time to the nearest five minutes. Students enjoy the inquiry into measurement, where they are provided with the opportunity to move around the classroom to measure various lengths,

perimeters, and distances. During the unit on geometry, students explore two-dimensional and three--dimensional shapes. They also explore fractions through the partitioning of shapes into equal shares and describing the shares using words. A popular unit focuses on interpreting data and graphing, where students develop their own surveys to organize their collected data.

World Languages

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

Students in both English and Japanese languages, 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 second grade, students review previously covered material, while new concepts are introduced such as food, colors, countries, places in Japan, transportation, languages, habitats, and likes and dislikes. Students begin to speak in full sentences with basic conversational terms. In conversations, students are able to create their own personal responses. Students continue to write simple, familiar English words and sentences and Japanese characters, words and sentences and learn to read well in both languages. They also continue to ask for simple information. Western, Asian and Japanese culture is explored through arts, music, and storybooks, and the celebration of various festivals around the world.

Dance

Second graders expand their movement vocabulary and learn to recognize and apply Dance Compositional tools such as level, speed, stillness and spatial paths, expanding/contracting, and advancing/retreating. They develop locomotor skills (skipping, jumping, and moving through space forwards, sideways, and at different levels) and create their own shapes based on design concepts such as creating negative space and geometric shapes and lines. They learn to take risks as they balance on one foot or on one foot and one hand, and improvise with many different parts of their body (shoulders, knees, head, hands, etc.). They create

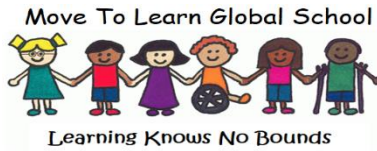
and notate simple dance sequences, swap notations with a partner to learn their partner's dance, and put two dances together to make longer sequences. Pictures of actions (stretching, floating, rockets blasting off, etc.) along with pictures and words from story books are used as impetus for developing movement vocabulary. In their How The World Works unit, they work in small groups to create dances based on the rock cycle, the water cycle, and the stages of a volcanic eruption.

Music

Second graders enjoy creating their own original melodies inspired by the knowledge and understanding during the Units of Inquiry. Students continue building their vocal and instrumental skills by combining their singing with instrumental accompaniment. In addition to exploring basic principles of harmony, second graders learn basic techniques of classical and world instruments, such as the ukulele, the violin, the cello, and the guitar. The main goal of the second grade music curriculum is to continue fostering and strengthening performance confidence, auditory memory, critical thinking, and collaborative skills in a context of transdisciplinary themes and differentiated approach to learning.

Physical Education

Second grade students develop the ability to solve physically challenging problems, individually, in pairs, and in small groups. They learn to identify different roles and responsibilities in team activities during adventure challenges. Students learn to apply skills and techniques involved in a variety of games--related activities, and lead--up games, as well as invent, present, evaluate, and modify their own tag games. Second graders are exposed to different stimuli of movement composition, and respond through movement to express feelings and moods using imagination and original ideas. They develop traditional gymnastic skills and interpret and answer movement tasks with or without a partner. Students explore and develop basic techniques of jumping, throwing, and running in their track and field unit, and are also introduced to collecting and recording results. Health--related activities are taught throughout the year and students focus on the relationship of nutrition and exercise within an interdisciplinary approach.



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Library

In second grade, students begin to recognize their ability to utilize the library's resources for their academic interests, as well as pursuing books for personal and aesthetic growth.

Research in second grade is highlighted through the How the World Works and Sharing the Planet units of inquiry by utilizing digital resources as well as print materials from the library collection to expand their understanding of the unit topics. Students become comfortable accessing online databases and collecting and recording information. Second graders explore the steps to becoming expert book-browsers and using the library to expand their reading interests. The layout and organization of the school library, the concept of choosing "just right" books, and the learning to be open-minded in book selection offer students many opportunities to develop an appreciation for and love of reading.

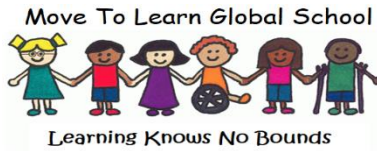
Design

In the second grade, students are becoming more proficient at using technology and thinking creatively. Students will continue to have design integrated in their classrooms two times per cycle where they utilize a variety of media for researching, creating, programming, and presenting that enrich their units of inquiry. Students explore a variety of tools in order to share their innovative thinking, including using Scratch Jr. to demonstrate their knowledge of how living things are connected in their unit for Sharing the Planet. One of their favorite units is Who We Are, where students use design principles to organize an alphabet book that demonstrates their knowledge of healthy habits and allows them to express their own sparks of genius.

Visual Arts

Second grade visual arts extends students' understanding of the basic elements of art and design and provides experiences with new materials for making. Inspired by our units of inquiry, students continue building their artistic skills in combination with observations of significant artworks, sensory experiences and material exploration in 2 and 3-dimensions. They work on noticing similarities and differences between artworks, investigate the processes of how artists have created their works and consider how these skills and ideas can be incorporated into their own work. As students grow in experience, they develop and fine tune their knowledge and manipulation of tools and materials, creating a solid foundation

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to foster a curiosity about the art world. Art-making projects include weaving, food sculptures, comics, geode sculptures, and still life drawings. Throughout the year students have the opportunity to present their artistic talents during class art talks, Community Meetings, Art Shows and special assemblies. The IB Learner Profile is at the center of our rich art life in Timothy House and is an integral part of our curriculum.

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