

# A Parent's Guide to the First Grade Curriculum

This synopsis can be used by parents to better understand the breadth and depth of the curriculum a student will encounter during first grade. Although curriculum is unique to each district, the objectives are created in alignment with the core content standards for the state of New Jersey. The concepts presented enable the students to develop the skills necessary for today and prepare them to succeed in the future. This brief overview may help you to guide your expectations for your child.

## **Reading and Language Arts**

Students experience reading, writing, listening, and speaking in this Balanced Literacy Model. Students will read a variety of materials at varying levels of difficulty.

### **Major Objectives**

#### **Reading**

- Understand and apply knowledge of phonics
- Apply reading strategies
- Decode through sound-symbol relationships
- Develop vocabulary
- Demonstrate comprehension of material

#### **Writing**

- Write in clear, concise, and organized language

#### **Speaking**

- Speak in clear and organized language patterns

#### **Listening**

- Determine initial, final, and middle sounds
- Identify rhyming words
- Respond to oral directions

#### **Handwriting**

- Form all letters of the manuscript alphabet

- **Mathematics**

Mathematics is taught using a hands-on approach. Students are given daily opportunity to manipulate various teaching tools to formulate and understand mathematical concepts. Students arrive at the realization that there are multiple ways to solve a problem. Class discussion and cooperative learning are integral components of the program. Literature is also connected to the concepts through trade books. Skills are evaluated daily through oral and written performances. Written assessments are also administered at the completion of each unit.

### **Major Concepts**

- Addition and Subtraction Facts
- Compliments of 10
- Place Value: Hundreds, Tens and Ones
- The number grid

### **Patterns and Algebra**

- Growing/ shrinking patterns
- Properties for addition and subtraction
- Skip counting

### **Geometry and Measurements**

- Money (coins)
- Time to the quarter hour
- 2 and 3 dimensional shapes
- Length, Height, Weight
- Line segments
- Symmetry
- Fractions

### **Probability and Discrete Mathematics**

- Graphs (bar, picture, charts, tables, Venn diagrams)
- Certainty and impossibility
- Representation of data

## **Basic Skills as Supplement to Math and Reading Instruction**

Each year, the BSI Program is tailored to meet the needs and number of students serviced.

In the **Pull-Out Setting**, students leave their classroom to receive small group instruction. Careful scheduling and planning between the BSI and regular education teachers ensure that the students do not miss direct, whole-group instruction.

The **Team-Teaching Model** allows the students to remain in their regular education classrooms. Both the classroom and basic skills teacher assume responsibility for all students and plan accordingly based on the needs of the students.

## **Science**

The three major areas of science: life, earth, and physical are all addressed in first grade.

### **Life: Plants and Animals**

- Living things have basic needs for survival
- Change
- Interdependence of ecosystems
- Extinction

### **Earth: Rocks and Minerals**

- Observable properties
- Change
- Soil components

### **Physical: Magnets and Matter**

- Attraction
- Force
- Properties of matter

## **Social Studies**

The focus is on family. Resources used include trade books, videos, and related projects. Students are assessed through teacher observation.

- What is a family?
- How families change over time
- How needs and wants are met
- Similarities and differences across cultures
- Respect for community

## **Health**

Students study topics of well-being such as: self-esteem, safety, interpersonal skills, the five senses, personal hygiene, the difference between medicine and drugs, and healthful foods.

## **Art**

Students will focus on three major painters who have contributed to art history. They will study line, shape, color, and abstract expressionism. Each child will have the opportunity to create his or her own “masterpieces” of art based on the styles of the focus artists.

## **PEP (Primary Enrichment Program)**

Lessons enrich and extend the concepts taught in the regular classroom. The topics covered focus on science, social studies, and mathematics. Children are encouraged to develop their creativity, problem solving skills, higher order thinking skills, and their listening skills.

## **Music**

Students will be provided with a variety of activities which will encourage them to continue to explore and learn music. Elements that will be discussed throughout the year will include rhythm, melody, and voice tone.

## **Library Curriculum**

Students are taught to recognize call numbers on the spines of easy fiction and nonfiction books. They identify the parts of a book such as cover, spine, book jacket, and barcode. Globes and atlas are used to identify the locations of stories to enhance the appreciation of various multicultural stories.

## **Physical Education**

Gross motor development instruction encourages students to move with control in their own space and in general space at different levels, directions and pathways through tempo, beat, rhythm, and musical styles. Students learn to maintain control in traveling, weight bearing, and balance activities. They engage in activities that develop all components of fitness and learn the difference between competitive and cooperative activities.