

## United Friends School First and Second Grade Curriculum at a Glance

### Language Arts

**Reading:** Children begin to increase word identification skills by using phonics, syntactic, and semantics. Children learn to select books that engage them at their reading level while progressing in skills and comprehension. Children read a variety of texts including leveled books, brochures, dictionaries, letters, and songbooks. Children continue to develop reading and comprehension skills and increase fluency. Mini-lessons use read alouds to model reading behavior, illuminating specific structures and skills like using context clues; children use KWLS (know, want to know, learned, and still want to know) as an organizing tool to inform their reading and learning. Genres include: fairy tales, holiday stories, science fiction, Reader's Theatre, biographies and author studies. Children re-read sections of text and self-correct for meaning. Children can explain information gathered through reading texts and can make predictions.

**Writing:** Children use invented spelling, with correct spelling for commonly used sight words and initial and final consonant blends; leave spaces between words; begin to use upper and lower case letters. Children begin to use the writing process: brainstorm, write, revise, edit and publish.

**Spelling:** We use the program *Words Their Way*. Through active exploration, word study teaches students to examine words, to discover the regularities, pattern and conventions of English orthography needed to read and spell. Word study increases specific knowledge of words, along with the spelling and meaning of individual words. Children are assessed in the beginning of the year and placed in the appropriate level.

**Handwriting:** *Handwriting Without Tears* emphasizes printing lowercase letters correctly and using them in words and sentences. In *My Printing Book* students continue to practice lower case letters to form words. *Printing Power* emphasizes smaller size printing in sentences and paragraphs.

### Math

The *Everyday Mathematics* curriculum emphasizes: "Use of concrete, real-life examples that are meaningful and memorable as an introduction to key mathematical concepts. Repeated exposures to mathematical concepts and skills to develop children's ability to recall knowledge from long-term memory. Frequent practice of basic computation skills to build mastery of procedures and quick recall of facts, often through games and verbal exercises. Use of multiple methods and problem-solving strategies to foster true proficiency and accommodate different learning styles."

The first and second grade *Everyday Mathematics* program emphasizes the following grade level goals: number and numeration, operations and computation, data and chance, geometry patterns, functions, and algebra.

### Science

In the study of science, we provide opportunities for children to learn that "people can figure out how the world works, that the universe is a unified system, that knowledge gained from studying one part of it can often be applied to other parts, and that knowledge is both stable and subject to change." Benchmarks for Science Literacy

This is accomplished by providing a science program that enables children to be independent learners and thinkers who are engaged in the scientific process of discovery. Children learn to observe, question,

organize, research and connect information as they construct meaning. Science is taught in a rotating three-year cycle as follows:

Yr 1: Earth and Space Science

Yr 2: Life Science

Yr 3: Physical Science

## **Social Studies**

Our primary goals in teaching social studies include; to develop cultural awareness, to improve the ability of children to think critically and analytically about social issues and to empower children to think from multiple perspectives, especially while developing their own.

We do this by providing many opportunities to explore and understand topics drawing upon such disciplines as history, geography, economics, anthropology, archaeology, sociology, political science and religion. We integrate the study of the social sciences with the humanities in order for children to see these topics as complex, interrelated ones. Social studies is taught in a rotating three-year cycle as follows:

Yr 1: one or more topics related to:

- Europe (e.g. mapping, culture, country studies, etc.)
- Asia (e.g. country study including religion, culture, art, historical period, etc.)
- United States (e.g. civil rights, judicial system, government, Quaker history)

Yr 2: one or more topics related to:

- North America (e.g. Canada, Mexico, Native Americans, etc.)
- South America (e.g. Incas, Patagonia, etc.)
- United States (e.g. polar expeditions, geography, slavery, etc.)

Yr 3: one or more topics related to:

- Africa (e.g. Egypt, culture studies, rites of passage, etc.)
- Oceania (e.g. native cultures, art, etc.)
- United States (e.g. mapping, states and capitals, the constitution, etc.)

## **Spirituality**

Each class has regular Meetings for Worship in their classrooms and each look different depending on the age of the children. There are Meetings that are periods of silent worship in which teachers help children sit still and listen to their inner voices. Some classes light candles to help children focus, while others have centering jars or rocks. There are Meetings that reflect on Quaker history or issues of peace and justice in the world and in the school. Children learn to address immediate conflicts, and all classes work hard to learn the skills of resolving conflicts without violence. Each year, we engage in a community focus of one testimony. We attempt to nourish spiritual growth within each child and inspire a greater sense of self-worth and respect for others.