

WELCOME TO GRADE 2



SEPTEMBER 2011 NEWSLETTER

GRADE 2-MRS. DIFONZO

Grade 2 Curriculum Overview

Reading, Writing and Spelling Program

Journals:

Students generally complete 2-3 journal entries in class each week. The children are expected to write full sentences with emphasis on proper punctuation such as capitals and periods. The main purpose of the journal entries is to develop the children's expression through writing as a form of communication. Emphasis is placed on the development of ideas and the logical flow of sentences.

Guided Reading:

Students learn to engage in books developing their fluency and comprehension of texts. The grade 2 literacy program includes *Literacy Place*, with an emphasis on small group instruction as well as whole class activities. With the *Reading Power Program* students learn how to make connections, analyze, question, infer and visualize. Students have a variety of books to choose from that are colourful, entertaining, informative and at the students' levels. Children learn to choose these 'just right' books so that they are able to develop their reading and comprehension abilities more effectively. The *Daily 5* program emphasizes the importance of 5 components for effective reading and comprehension: reading to self, read to others, listen to reading, work on writing, and word work. By October all 5 components are part of the daily literacy program in grade 2.

Phonics and Grammar:

During the first term there will be a review of short vowel sounds, blends, initial, medial and ending sounds of words. The meanings of and

applications of nouns, verbs, adverbs, and adjectives are reinforced. An emphasis on grammatical rules such as the uses of past and present tenses, subject-verb agreements, and the proper uses of articles are reinforced. The program for use in grade 2 is *What To Teach and How*.

Home Reading Program:

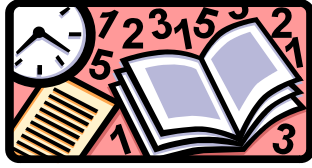
One of the most important things we (you and I) could ever do for your children is to help them develop a love of reading. A love for learning that will last a lifetime and open doors for them in the future. This requires a commitment on both our parts. A home reading log will go home every night with your child. Please look in his/her book bag daily for a different book. Have your child read to you each night before bedtime (about 20 minutes). Ask them questions about the book, stopping throughout to check your child's understanding of the story as well as his/her thoughts, and opinions. Please sign the home reading log and ensure it is returned the following day to school. *Remember reading and comprehension go hand in hand. If a child can read a story but not understand it, then the book is too hard. Students in the primary grades have been developing their skills to choose 'just right' books. If your child is choosing books that are too difficult please let me know so that we can work on his/her book choosing skills. There is also a *Home Reading Response Journal* that will be going home. It is designed to engage children in thought provoking activities, reflections and to engage them in creative writing and an expression of ideas.

Spelling Program:

A list of 15 words is given as a pre-test (marked but not recorded) every Monday. They have the whole week to practice writing these words through various activities at home and at school. On the Friday of each week, a Post test on the same words is given to them (marked and recorded).

Book Orders/Subscription

Our school is hosting a Book Fair soon. Please support this project by purchasing educational materials for your child. As well, each month children's books will be made available through *Scholastic* through the monthly flyer. If you would like to purchase them please ensure that cheques are made out to Scholastic Canada (cheques are preferable to cash) along with order form. If you use cash however, please ensure that envelopes are properly labeled and sealed with your child's name and grade on them. This is a great way to build up your child's home library.



Social Studies and Science Curriculum

Students learn how to read and interpret a map of their local neighbourhood. They will learn about and do activities to strengthen their knowledge of communities, family and friends. The science curriculum will focus on a basic understanding of animal changes and growth. Students will get an opportunity to compare and contrast animal lifecycles and to observe an animal grow in the classroom particularly butterflies and snails. Other science topics will include a study of the properties of matter, air, water and soil. Students will conclude their unit on water with a trip to the Seymour Nature reserve and engage in a nature study walk around Rice Lake in North Vancouver.

Math

Students will learn the place value of numbers to 100. They will focus on mastering their basic addition and subtraction facts as well as learn to work with double digit numbers. Problem solving and “hands on” group work will also be a focus. A focus on developing critical thinking skills and mental math strategies will be a focus for the grade 2’s. Students complete various activities in geometry, place value, fractions, patterns, ordinal numbers, skip counting, multiplication and measurement. Our main programs are the “*Math Makes Sense*” program and the *Creative Mathematics* program.

Reconciliation and First Holy Communion

Grade 2 is a very special year as children receive the sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. Children learn about our forgiving, loving God and the importance of forgiving others’ their sins through the sacrament of Reconciliation. An understanding of the body of Christ and the magnificent gift our Lord has given us through the sacrament of Holy Communion will be emphasized during our spring term. Parent meetings discussing the preparation for First Holy Communion will take place in the spring with the elementary and prep teachers as well as Father Hawkswell.

Computers

Children are introduced to typing programs and various educational programs as a support to our academic curriculum. There will be an emphasis on word processing and typing. The *Abracadabra* literacy website is also used.

Expectations

Homework Policy

The students are generally given homework (2-3 times per week) and reading. If a student has two or three assignments that means he/she did not finish his/her work at school. Please ensure that homework is done. If your child is having difficulty with the homework please let me know so that I can adjust or modify the quantity and content. Generally grade 2 students can get about 20 minutes of homework as well as their daily reading each night. If there is little homework or no homework on a particular night, have your child read a book chapter or study for his/her spelling test. Also we are focusing on the mastery of basic addition and subtraction facts (single digits). Students would benefit from flash cards, card games and math activities that can be done at home to reinforce mental math strategies and critical thinking skills.

Discipline

The children are given rules and regulations to follow, following the "School Wide" discipline policy in your parent handbook. As a class, we made up some classroom rules and signed our poster, promising each other we would work together and do our best at school. Throughout the year the children engage in social skills training, classroom discussions, and role play activities to learn peaceful, diplomatic solutions to typical school problems that may arise. We also have a comment box where children can write down any comments or suggestions for future classroom topics of discussion. If students break the rules they will be asked to discuss the problem and come up with a solution as well as a consequence. If the problem persists a parent meeting will be scheduled to discuss further options of solutions.

Student Planners

Please ensure that day planners are signed on a regular basis. It is an effective way to communicate daily and make sure important information is relayed. Please approach me if there are any problems you would like to discuss.

Conference

If you would like to discuss your child's progress please let me know and we can arrange a time.

Parent Volunteers

If you would like to volunteer as parent helpers on our field trips or in another area of the program, please let me know.

Religion Books

In our Religion book, *Christ Our Life* there is a parent corner that you are encouraged to do with your child. Please try to do these activities

regularly at home as they really enhance and reinforce concepts taught in class. This year our school's theme is *Be The Good News*. When you come into the grade 2 classroom you will notice in our prayer corner a mailbox. Throughout the year we will focus on how God would like us to be the good news for God, others and ourselves. If we follow Christ's teaching we know that it requires a responsibility of taking care of God's creations and having a sense of awe and wonderment of the world. Various projects and activities will focus on this important theme.

Permission Forms/Money Collection

Please ensure that any money your child brings to school for things like book orders, pictures, Communion gown rentals etc. is placed in a clearly labeled and sealed envelope with your child.

Uniforms/ P.E. strips

The grade 2 class will take part in PE three times per week, on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays except during swimming times. Please ensure that uniforms are taken home regularly to be cleaned. During the weeks children attend swimming lessons, have your child wear their bathing suit under their uniforms in the morning. For female students socks are preferred over leotards on swimming days since it is easier for them to take them off and put them on before and after swimming.

Clothing

Please label all of your child's clothing. I recommend the use of sew-on labels on tunics, shirts, pants, etc. Since uniforms all look the same, it will help your child avoid confusion when identifying his/her clothing.

I am looking forward to a fabulous year of learning in grade 2. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

God Bless You,
Mrs. S. DiFonzo (Grade 2 Teacher)



Remember.....

BE THE GOOD NEWS

