

## **Yellow Room (Second Grade) Curriculum**

The Yellow Room Curriculum is designed to support and challenge students as they progress academically, to guide them as they develop socially, and to nurture them as they continue to grow independently. Students are encouraged and expected to participate as part of the Yellow Room community by asking questions and sharing their ideas. It is understood that children will participate and contribute in different ways, depending upon individual personalities and comfort levels.

### **Language Arts**

In second grade students continue to develop effective communication skills with an emphasis on oral fluency and listening. Yellow Roomers engage daily in a variety of reading, writing, speaking and listening activities incorporated throughout the curriculum. Direct reading and writing instruction is provided during Guided Reading groups, Word Study or S.P.I.R.E. mini lessons, Specifically Sentences lessons, Journal Writing check-ins, and Poems & Songs choral reading/singing. Yellow Roomers also listen to read-alouds of picture and chapter books. Reading aloud to children helps them increase their concentration and attention spans and also serves as a model for reading with fluency and expression.

Guided Reading instruction focuses on skills such as decoding unfamiliar words within sentence context; understanding and “reading” punctuation; understanding new vocabulary; making predictions before and during the reading of a text; reading to confirm predictions; identifying the problem, solution and main idea in a text; describing story elements such as setting and characterization; comparing and contrasting characters and/or stories; and retelling and paraphrasing. Together the teacher and students analyze the text and the author’s message. Small group discussions encourage students to express their own opinions, articulate their understanding, and connect what they read to other texts as well as to their own experiences. Guided Reading Groups facilitate continuing development of reading skills, comprehension, and fluency, leading to increased reading confidence and independence. When not meeting with a teacher-led Guided Reading Group, Yellow Roomers work independently, reinforcing their literacy skills by engaging in sustained silent reading, writing in response to their reading, responding to prompts in their Journals, and writing creatively in blank books.

The purpose of Word Study is to build word knowledge and vocabulary through an examination of phonics clues, spelling patterns, and word origins. Word Study includes activities such as manipulating letters to make words, sorting words by vowel sounds and spelling patterns, examining consonant blends and digraphs, and studying word roots and prefixes. As word knowledge grows, reading, writing, comprehension and communication skills are also strengthened. Individuals may also participate in *S.P.I.R.E.* lessons with the teacher. While the title of this program (*Specialized Program Individualizing Reading Excellence*) emphasizes growth in reading, the design and repetition of

S.P.I.R.E. lesson components simultaneously spotlight and address issues in spelling and writing. The goals of Specifically Sentences lessons are for students to gain a clear understanding of the elements of a complete sentence and to apply that knowledge to their writing. Lessons include: identifying subject and predicate, discriminating between common and proper nouns, determining subject-verb agreement, brainstorming alternatives for overused words, and choosing and using correct punctuation.

Based on the theory that students learn to write by writing, Journal Writing provides Yellow Roomers with frequent, informal writing practice. Students are given prompts as a springboard for creative expression and are encouraged to write increasingly longer entries, adding details for clarity and interest. Individuals are asked to carefully read over each of their Journal entries, looking for and self-correcting errors. During one-on-one conferences with the teacher, students receive mini-lessons addressing one or more writing skills at a time. When Journal prompts ask students to respond to a read-aloud, they have the opportunity to demonstrate reading comprehension while also practicing the conventions of writing. Other prompts provide avenues for students to express their ideas, opinions and imaginations; synthesize their theme study learning; observe the world around them more closely; write descriptively using their senses; experiment with language; and reflect upon personal experiences in order to write with increased meaning. Journal Writing provides students with frequent opportunities to apply their growing spelling awareness and understanding of writing mechanics in a meaningful context.

In addition to Journal Writing, Yellow Roomers engage in a variety of formal writing projects throughout the year. Whole class writing lessons focus on generating pre-writing ideas; organizing and sequencing; sentence structure and punctuation; grammar usage; the introduction of characters, settings, problems and solutions; and writing for a variety of purposes and audiences. In the spring, students participate in the annual BNS Authors' Tea. Yellow Roomers prepare for this eagerly-anticipated event through a writing process facilitated by one-on-one teacher guidance, with an emphasis on revising for clarity and proofreading/editing. The Authors' Tea celebrates students as writers when they read their stories in front of an audience of classmates, family members, and friends.

Throughout the year students are encouraged to use the spelling resources available to them, including environmental print. Phonetic spelling (students' use of alphabetic representation for sounds and word patterns) may be used when writing rough drafts and Journal entries. Students are also encouraged to use a strategy called "Sticky Note Spelling" in which they give a word two tries before having the correct spelling verified by the teacher. Students are expected to use conventional spelling during Word Study practice and Specifically Sentences work, as well as in classroom-published writing.

The Yellow Roomers build a collection of theme study-related poems and songs throughout the year. Reading/reciting/singing poems and songs as a class provides a model for (and practice with) reading with expression and intentional emphasis. Students examine structures of poems and songs, note how

writing mechanics are used for specific purposes, and reflect on the imagery and meaning created by the writer. Special attention is given to interesting and playful language (i.e., rhyming words, alliteration and onomatopoeia, repetition), as well as to new vocabulary.

## **Second Grade Literacy**

### **Objectives**

Read fiction, nonfiction and poetry independently

- Use knowledge of common vowel patterns, consonants and consonant blends when reading - Use knowledge of syllables to decode words - Use knowledge of sentence structure, story structure and story sequence when reading - Expand reading vocabulary - Reread and self-correct when necessary, using context to decode words and to clarify meaning - Read with fluency and expression Demonstrate reading comprehension (orally and in writing)

- Make personal connections between previous experiences and reading selections - Make predictions; read to confirm predictions - Ask questions when reading - Answer questions about what is read - Locate information in texts - Describe characters, setting and important events in fiction selections and poetry - Identify the problem, solution and main idea Read and follow written instructions independently Give and follow oral directions with three or more steps Clarify and explain words and ideas orally Use oral language to inform, persuade and entertain (in both formal and informal settings) Share stories or information orally with an audience (in both formal and informal settings) Demonstrate an understanding of language structure in conversation, storytelling, writing and oral dramatic activities Expand listening and speaking vocabularies Participate as a contributor and as a leader in a group Write stories, letters and simple explanations

- Generate ideas before writing - Organize writing to include a beginning, middle and end - Recognize and write in complete sentences - Use capitalization at the beginning of sentences - Include end punctuation - Revise writing for clarity - Use knowledge of vowel patterns, consonants, consonant blends and syllables when attempting spellings - Use correct spellings of high-frequency sight words

### **Theme Study (Science and Social Studies)**

Yellow Room theme studies have been selected and developed with the goals of increasing students' understanding of the natural world and the concept of change, and expanding students' knowledge of North American geography, native peoples, early settlers, and historical figures through the Civil Rights Movement. Theme Study lessons and activities teach students to formulate questions, employ reasoning and logic skills, consider multiple perspectives, make connections, conduct research and experiments, draw comparisons and conclusions, present data and write about their learning. Yellow Room theme studies include: Weather and the Water Cycle; Native Americans; Early Explorers of North America and *Mayflower* Pilgrims; States of Matter; American Symbols and Historical Figures; Communication and Transportation Over Time; Geography and Map Skills; Forces, Motion and Magnets; Natural, Human and Capital Resources; Animal and Plant Life Cycles; and the Power of Plants.

Each Yellow Roomer participates in the annual BNS Science Fair by creating, conducting and presenting an in-depth investigation of their choice. The Science Fair provides students with the opportunity to share their projects and learning with an audience of peers, family members and friends.

## **Math**

BNS utilizes the University of Chicago School Mathematics Project curriculum, *Everyday Mathematics*, for grades K-4. *Everyday Mathematics* is a spiraling curriculum it introduces new concepts, then – revisits these concepts at different points throughout the year and in subsequent years. Yellow Room Math students work independently, with partners and as a whole class. Students receive direct group instruction on mathematical concepts and are then given opportunities to apply their new learning and build on their skills with individual practice and partner games. Students are encouraged to use a variety of tools and resources when solving problems (i.e., base-10 blocks, mini clocks, play money, rulers, number grids). Yellow Room math students are also encouraged to articulate their problem-solving strategies in order to demonstrate and reinforce their learning. By listening to each other's strategies and processes, students become aware of new ways to approach and solve problems. Students also work on practice pages in their Math Journals to reinforce their growing understanding of new and reviewed concepts. During this time individuals receive further one-on-one instruction, as needed. A monthly Math Game Day emphasizes the fun in everyday math while reinforcing previously learned concepts and helping students further develop and practice a variety of math skills.

### **Second Grade Mathematics Concepts and Skills**

Solve addition and subtraction number stories using single operation and two-operation number models Identify place value (ones, tens, hundreds, thousands) Identify even and odd numbers Write numbers in expanded form/notation Add three 2-digit addends Measure line segments to the nearest inch/centimeter Compare numbers as  $<$   $>$  or  $=$  Plot data on a bar graph Read and interpret data from a bar graph Count by 2s, 5s, 10s and 25s Read/write time on analog clocks to the nearest 5-minute interval Draw hands on analog clocks to match given times Identify 2-D shapes, quadrilaterals, parallel lines and right angles Name/write the sums = 10 (including turn-around facts) Solve basic addition and subtraction facts Solve 2-digit addition problems requiring no more than one exchange Solve 3-digit addition problems requiring no more than one exchange Solve 2-digit subtraction problems Solve 3-digit subtraction problems Explain problem-solving steps orally and in writing

### **Art, Music, Spanish, & Physical Education**

Specialists employed by BNS provide students with regular instruction in Art, Music, P.E. and Spanish. Curricula information for these subjects is available on the BNS website -- [www.new-school.org](http://www.new-school.org).

### **Homework & Assessment**

Yellow Room homework includes reading children's periodicals (*Scholastic NEWS* and *Science SPIN*), completing Word Sort practice pages, and creating and presenting several Home Fun Projects throughout the year.

- At least twice during the year students will be given formal reading assessments to determine their reading comprehension levels.
- Students' reading progress throughout the year is assessed during Guided Reading instruction and during one-on-one conferences with the teacher.
- At least twice during the year students will be given formal Qualitative Spelling Inventories to determine Word Study skills/needs.
- Once a week students' retention of Word Sort spellings will be assessed with Spelling Tries, including two dictation sentences.
- Students' writing progress will be assessed through review of in-class writing assignments and during one-on-one conferences with the teacher.
- Students' understanding of math concepts will be formally evaluated through written *Everyday Mathematics* assessments following each unit of study, mid-year and end-of-year.
- Students will informally demonstrate their problem-solving skills as well as their on-going understanding of math concepts during class lessons and on Math Journal practice pages.

Parent-teacher conferences are held three times during the school year to review students' progress and to discuss ongoing goals.

*Note: The Virginia Standards of Learning for second grade have been incorporated into the Yellow Room Curriculum.*