

## **E1 Lower Elementary Curriculum (Miss. Murray)**

### **READING:**

In the lower elementary we receive varying stages of readiness for reading. Some are reading fluently and will be in chapter books. Most first grade students are just getting started with reading. I use the Carden Method with them. It is a very controlled phonics approach with a strong emphasis on comprehension and vocabulary. There is a unique spelling component included in the Carden Method. We work with sequencing our stories, visualizing the printed word (there are no pictures in the books), summarizing and predicting. As they progress through the 3 readers they are becoming ready for chapter books. All reading groups are based on individual needs (even if that means complete one-on-one instruction). They will have opportunities daily to explore books and will be expected to read or be read to at home for 15 minutes a night. I will read Big Books to them (with ample opportunities for teaching moments), science and social study books, and any other books in which they might have a special interest. My daily phonics circle is a huge success. All the students seem to enjoy it very much. The children will also learn simple alphabetizing of words.

### **WRITING:**

Writing is one of my favorite subjects to teach. In the first grade we are working on knowing when one sentence ends and another begins. We are working on starting a sentence with a capital letter and ending with some form of punctuation. We learn that a story has a beginning, middle, and end. They will have exposure to many different kinds of writing such as plays, poems, letters, journals, etc. Those who are able to do these things will work on making their stories richer by considering other word choices. They will learn to self-edit their work, and they will work with the teacher after doing self-editing. These are such great teaching opportunities for me to point out particular things we have been working on in spelling or sentence construction. The children will do creative writing at least once a week. These projects are a more finished writing to take home.

## **MATH:**

**Students in the first grade will learn how to add and subtract concretely and in the abstract. With any luck, we will be adding and subtracting two and three digit numbers with regrouping and borrowing. This is not a first grade requirement, but I have found that all my students have been able to move this far. They will not be pushed past what they are able to do. They will have the opportunity to work with math in stories. They will be expected to use reason and logic in solving these problems. They have the opportunity to discuss with each other what their thinking is and how they arrived at their answers. They will work with the concepts of multiplication and division, but will not be expected to do this abstractly. We will study time and money and fractions. We will go as far as they take me in these areas. They will work with measurement in inches and centimeters. They will also learn to use different body parts to estimate distances. They will learn to count by twos, fives, and tens. They will work with geometry in the form of shapes and names of these shapes. The students will have lessons based on their individual development and needs and will be divided into groups accordingly.**

## **SCIENCE AND SOCIAL STUDIES:**

**Throughout the year there will be several different theme units in science and social studies. They will have the opportunity to do hands-on projects, explore, discover and experiment. The subjects will carry over into our reading, writing, and art programs as the year progresses and the children are more fluent in reading and writing. Mrs. McCalla (the art teacher) and I work closely in integrating art, science, and social studies.**

## **SPECIALS:**

**My class goes to Spanish one hour a week, and they go to art one hour a week. The children will explore rhythm and sound in my class.**

## **FIELD TRIPS:**

**I try to take the children on one field trip a month on average. We concentrate on the fine arts. They will see plays and experience music. We will take trips to museums to further explore our theme units. *And* we take some field trips just for the fun of it. As an example, when we study Polar Regions we will go ice skating.**

## **EXPECTATIONS:**

**It is in the first grade that children start to be held accountable for their actions. The only homework I like to give is reading at night. However, if children are not doing their work in school, they will be expected to do it at night. If they are not bringing that work in from home, then they will be expected to do it when the other children are at recess. They are accountable for their actions at school. There are consequences for hitting, pushing, kicking, etc. We will spend 15 to 30 minutes each day learning how to make good choices. They will have an opportunity to role-play and brainstorm choices for circumstances.**