

כיתה ב

Second grade marks the start of a gradual shift in the balance between kinds of learning: from primarily learning basic skills to using basic skills to further learning. The focus of reading instruction shifts from seeking accuracy and fluency toward reaching meaningful understanding. Writing expands from learning how to write to writing in order to communicate ideas and from inventive spelling to conventional spelling. Math develops from learning basic calculations to also using calculations to solve more complex problems. Homework also evolves over the course of the year, beginning with 20 minutes of reading in English and 10 minutes in Hebrew daily and expanding, early in the year, to include specific math assignments and a reader response journal on a regular basis.

A shift takes place in social development, as well. With support from their teachers, using the Second Step social-emotional curriculum, second graders become increasingly responsible for their own interactions and work patterns. Many students experience their first meaningful change in social dynamics and teachers support them in growing to understand these shifting dynamics as normal. More of their learning takes place in small independent groups, and children are given a greater role in the conduct and management of their classroom life.

ART

The second grade art class starts in the classroom but quickly moves to the art room, as students are ready to graduate to this advanced workspace. The focus of the second grade curriculum also moves from exploration of materials to exploration of art concepts. Children learn about design through projects in symmetry and asymmetry as well as other skills seen in the work of well known artists. The whole class works on a couple of projects that require each student's work to become part of a whole. For example, the artistic work of children's author Eric Carle is the inspiration for a painted animal project where each child adds his/her part to create a whole animal. Other art skills are explored by imitating other classic children's books. The year culminates with work related to the classroom's Creation Celebration unit—teams of students plan and execute projects based on an assigned day of creation..

In addition to the formal art curriculum, children in second grade are also engaged throughout the year in a variety of art activities related to other curricular areas. They also go to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, focusing on the art exhibits of various cultures.

עברית HEBREW

In second grade the Hebrew program shifts to a balanced emphasis between oral and written communication.

The structured speaking patterns that children use in their daily routines are expanded and extended, and children are also asked to take more risks in their speaking and

initiate their own spoken sentences. They also practice speaking in Hebrew during games, skits, interviews, and art activities throughout the day.

In reading, as the children become more fluent readers and learn how to read without vowels, the focus remains on reading for meaning, using many of the skills already mastered in English reading – prediction, using picture clues, breaking down words and looking at their parts – as well as some strategies specific to Hebrew – using the *shoresh* (verb root), recognizing prefixes and suffixes, and learning new vocabulary and concepts prior to encountering them in context. Reading materials are drawn from a variety of sources and supplemented by teacher-produced materials that extend children’s understanding of the topic.

Writing is supported by a focus on learning language patterns that are reinforced through diagrams, movement, readings, exercises, and colorful and accessible reference charts. Group writing is also used to support phonics and reading skills. Opportunities for writing Hebrew often emerge out of children’s reading experiences, pictures and photographs that are used as writing prompts, and their work in Torah. Students learn to write in script, and they are increasingly asked to spell high-frequency words correctly. Students’ conventional spelling consequently improves significantly over the course of the year.

Language elements that children learn in second grade include agreement in gender and number, correct use of the present tense, and accurate use of possessives and prepositions.

JEWISH STUDIES

Complementing their continued *parashat hashavua* (weekly Torah portion) activities, second graders begin studying the Torah narrative in a sustained way with *Bereshit* (Genesis) 1, 12, and 17. Using a shared text, children become increasingly independent in their ability to study the text and use it without having to translate it word-for-word into English. Our *Bereshit* 1 unit culminates in a multidisciplinary student showcase. The Creation Celebration includes music, dance, student *divrei Torah* and a STEAM tie-in.

Later in the year, to read the text for understanding, the children work in *chevruta* (study pairs), where they are supported by vocabulary lists and comprehension questions that supply necessary information for each verse. In addition, the children learn elements of biblical grammar, such as *shorashim* (verb roots), *vav hahipuch* (the conversive *vav*), and compound words, to expand their repertoire of word attack skills.

In addition to understanding the text, children respond to questions that require inference and sensitivity to the nuances of the text, as well as invitations to place themselves in the shoes of the biblical characters. In class discussion, they inquire into

philosophical questions, relate the stories to their own lives, and use art, drama, and movement to enhance their learning.

In *t'filah*, second graders continue to expand their knowledge of the liturgy, returning to the *Amidah*, which they previously encountered in *Gan* and *Kitah Aleph* in abbreviated form. In studying the *Amidah* this time, they begin to learn the full text of the *b'rachot*, and in their discussion, they compare the understanding they gained based on the excerpt learned previously with their more comprehensive understanding based on the full text. In some cases, their commentary on each *siddur* page now incorporates both pictures and words.

The second graders' insights into and knowledge of *chagim* (Jewish holidays) continues to deepen as they both revisit previous years' experiences and introduce new elements: for Sukkot, they learn the liturgy of the holiday and lead a portion of the service. They also learn the concept of *hadar* (aesthetically pleasing, beautiful) as it applies to Sukkot, they analyze the nature of the miracle of *Chanukah* as it is presented in the *Al Hanisim* text, they chart the emotional landscape of the Purim story by graphing the changing mood of each of the main characters from scene to scene, they take a fresh look at the Four Questions, interpreting them as setting up a contrast between two opposing themes of slavery and freedom in their own *hagadah* on *Pesach*, and they explore the agricultural link between *Pesach* and *Shavuot*.

LITERACY

As in the early years, reading and writing are inextricably linked, and both are increasingly used to support children's learning in theme. Routinely, children make connections between what they are reading and what they are writing.

The second grade reading program is extensive and varied. Children continue to build on the decoding strategies that they learned in previous years, using class-wide lists of high-frequency words and new knowledge gained from word study; in addition, they vastly expand their repertoire of comprehension strategies, including making inferences from the text structure and using visual representations, as well as predicting, summarizing, asking questions, and making connections. As the children gain more experience with factual texts, they learn to make use of captions, headings, sidebars, index, table of contents, and glossary.

Elements of the reading program that support these goals may include independent reading, paired reading, reading from a script ("Reader's Theater"), guided reading in groups, author studies, and exploring the nonfiction genre deeply by writing a nonfiction text.

By second grade, children are becoming more independent in their writing and able to use each other as resources comfortably. They appreciate that writing is a process and that finishing a first draft is only one step on the way to completing a piece of writing.

Students practice writing personal narratives, poetry, factual pieces, and fictional narratives.

Direct instruction in the elements of writing, writing workshop, and journal writing continue to be emphasized. In word study, children learn to notice and think about words and their components, such as vowel patterns, prefixes, and suffixes. They also focus on other grammatical constructs, such as contractions and plural endings. These experiences enable children to become more skilled and independent spellers. Skills learned in previous years are reinforced: handwriting, planning, sequencing, editing, and revising. New skills are introduced, as well, such as knowing and using parts of speech, character development in fiction writing, and line breaks in poetry.

MATHEMATICS

The dual emphasis on mathematical reasoning and skill development continues in second grade. Sharing and cooperation remain important learning skills, as children are regularly asked to share problem-solving methods with each other.

Key goals for the year include mastery of math facts for addition and subtraction, measurement skills, place value knowledge, and the study of money, time, and fractions. Second graders study the following concepts, skills, and strategies:

- Two and three-digit addition and subtraction
- Place value
- Regrouping
- Addition and subtraction word problems
- Money (identifying coins, counting, adding, and subtracting)
- Skip-counting
- Fractions (half, thirds, fourths)
- Two- and three-dimensional geometric shapes and their characteristics
- Time – telling time, timelines, calculating the passage of time
- Measurement
- Collecting and representing data

MUSIC

In second grade, the children continue to expand their repertoire of American and Israeli songs and are excited to participate in the school-wide monthly *shirah b'tzibur* (community sing). The second graders sing with a spirit that is all their own. In addition to singing songs, children learn elements of music theory. They can identify volume (soft and loud), pitch (high and low), and tempo (fast and slow). They can identify moods in music and begin to learn to identify motifs. They are introduced to the rhythmic organizing principle of bar or measure. They continue to be exposed to classic works of Western music, such as Haydn's "The Creation" and Joplin's "The Entertainer," and interpret and express their musical ideas and moods through movement.

An important part of the second grade curriculum is the Musical Explorers program run by Carnegie Hall. Through this program, students learn about the music of different cultures and are introduced to musicians from the five boroughs who represent a range of musical backgrounds and traditions. Students have studied music from Africa, Asia and South America as well as jazz and salsa.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

By the time children are in second grade, they have developed skills that allow them to play more organized team games, such as kickball and soccer, with greater skill confidence. We begin to explore strategy in second grade. Students also begin to understand force and control, balance and agility, and well as more competitive play. Many discussions surround the ideas of “winning” and “losing,” how to be a “good” winner and a “good” loser. Time is also spent on reflection and self-talk. This helps the students build a better bond with their classmates as well as a greater understanding for sport.

THEMATIC STUDIES, SCIENCE & SOCIAL SCIENCE

At the beginning of second grade, students focus on community as a theme, with a concentration on neighborhoods. While exploring the life and structures of community in their local neighborhood on the Upper West Side and others around New York City, students develop an understanding of what constitutes a community, why people come together, and how each community expresses the beliefs and lifestyles of a group of people. Throughout the study, students look at the surrounding geography of each

community and learn how that influences lifestyle and commerce. In addition, they develop mapping skills, including how to use a compass rose and how to read and use a map.

In science, students start the year doing a hands-on study of matter, and in the winter complete a science unit focused on the water cycle. Through these different units, students make observations, develop hypotheses, collect and record data, and learn the basics of the scientific method and scientific thinking. Later in the year, students study the production of ice cream “from cow to cone,” learning both how the raw materials are produced and how they are processed to create ice cream. They also do a natural science unit on the beaver and investigate their habitat, adaptations and affect on their surrounding environment. In all units, book research is supplemented by field trips, museum visits, scientific observations and experiments, interviews, and other means of science and social-science investigation.

Students have a weekly coding class where they explore structures of code such as sequencing, loops, and conditionals. Students explore these concepts through a series of "unplugged" games and activities, as well as through iPad-based exercises using block-based languages. Students apply their understanding of coding by programming robots to navigate obstacles and follow simple commands.