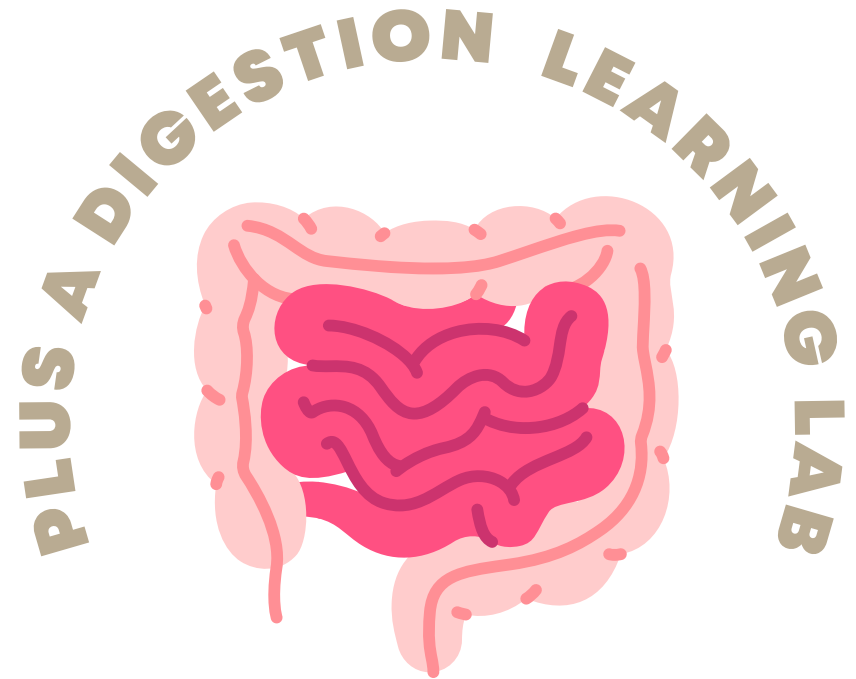


Your Natural Learner

FREE SAMPLE OF THE FIRST GRADE CURRICULUM



Developmental Growth in First Grade

The biggest areas of growth that your first grader will go through in this year are emotional and social growth. As they move from their view of the world in which they see only themselves to a space where they recognize that there are multiple view points, that the world around them is much bigger, and that they fit into this world in a unique way, so many of their beliefs and understandings are challenged and start to shift and change. This growth and development presents a remarkable opportunity to explore the world around them from their unique perspective, and this is how Your Natural Learner First Grade was built.

To support your child's emotional and social growth and development, allow ample opportunities for discussion, and prepare for big ideas and concepts to arise that you hadn't anticipated. Be open with your child and allow them a safe space to talk about these ideas with you - the more you make yourself available for the small discussions when they are this age, the more open and honest they will be with you when they are older!

Support your child's physical growth and development through lots of outdoor exploration time! Provide opportunities for risky play, large movement, and exploration of ways to move their bodies now that they are bigger and (slightly) more coordinated.

Developmental Growth in First Grade continued...

Consider creating a space in your home that allows for big play indoors as well-a "yes" space where your child knows that they can jump, climb, bounce, and be busy and loud when they need to exert energy. This is a great time to consider signing your child up for group sports or activities if they are showing interest -this gives your child the opportunity to not only hone and practice specific physical skills, but also provides them a chance to explore different social interactions in a risk-free context.

Lastly, your first grader will be developing numerous academic skills through this huge developmental year of first grade. While it is great to observe and assess these skills, and this curriculum will help you do just that, keep in mind that there is so much more development to witness that isn't just academic. Your child's emotional, social, physical, and mental growth and development will grow leaps and bounds this year - make sure to pay attention to the things that really matter!

Above all, remember that your child is a unique learner that is developing on their own beautiful, natural timeline. There is no need for rushing them or comparing them to anyone else. Embrace their individual journey and find the joys in watching them grow and change in so many special ways throughout this first grade year.

Intention

Time is a difficult concept for young children to grasp, but around the first grade age, as more things become concrete in their development, they are more able to make sense of how the days, weeks, and months pass by. In this "My Time" theme, your child will be exploring and practicing how time progresses in a variety of ways, both practically (learning to read a clock and follow a schedule) as well as abstractly (discovering the concepts of sequences, time progression, etc.)

Note to Parent Educator

Each child is going to be developmentally different in their readiness for understanding the concrete skill of learning to read a clock, especially an analog clock. Allow for plenty of opportunity for practice, but don't push the skill if your child is not ready to understand it. The other skills in this theme will help tremendously in building their readiness for telling time.

Key Learning

Time is how everything in life moves. It includes the past (what already happened), the present (what is happening now), and the future (what is going to happen).

What subjects are included in the First Grade Curriculum?

- Art Activities
- Math Connections
- Science Experiments
- Social Connections
- Sensory Activities
- Nature Explorations
- Food Fun
- & more!

Want to know more?

Scroll to the last page of this sample booklet for a complete Scope & Sequence that provides one possible order of themes, you can do the themes in any order that works for your child and family! It also shows the skills and academics covered in each of the themes.

Ready to buy all nine themes?



Purchase First Grade Curriculum

naturallarningshop.com

Important First Grade Skill:

Recognizing Sequences in Stories and Using Sequence Words in Writing

One of the most important literacy skills that your child should develop during their first grade year is the ability to recognize the sequence structure of a story. At this stage, only a very basic understanding needs to happen - for example, your child should be able to give you details from the Beginning, Middle, and End of a fictional story. They don't yet need to learn specifics about plot details or character development, though if your child is ready, those are the next logical steps.

The best way to practice sequencing is to choose books with very obvious three-part structure and have conversations as you read about the developing sequence. Generally speaking, most fictional tales will present a problem (**Beginning**), have the main character attempt several times to solve it (**Middle**), and eventually find the solution (**End**). A good activity to practice recognizing the story sequence is to use sticky notes for your child to draw or write on as you read.

Have three or four sticky notes available during a reading session. Write "beginning" on one, "middle" on one or two (some stories have so many details in the middle that children want to include), and "end" on one. Before reading, give the sticky notes to your child on a clipboard or table and ask them to draw or write what happens in the story at each of those points. During reading, when you notice your child writing, pause to give them time to complete what they're working on so they don't miss the story. After reading, have your child explain what they drew or wrote to correspond with the sequence of the story.

For emphasis, you could flip back through the book and have your child place the sticky notes on the appropriate pages. They should notice that the sticky notes are being placed in order of how they drew as you flip from start to finish. To encourage sequencing practice in writing, have your child write a "How To..." writing piece explaining how to do one of their favorite things. This can be simple like "How to Eat an Oreo" or "How to Build a Lego Minifigure." Encourage the use of transitional/sequence words like *first*, *next*, *then*, *last*, *finally*, etc.

ABC Nature Walk from the Nature Activities Section

To practice letter and sound recognition as well as celebrating the earth, make your nature walk a bit challenging by going on an ABC nature hunt! Before heading out on a nature walk, make a scavenger hunt sheet with boxes for each of the letters A through Z. You could do this by hand by making a quick grid or print something out. As you are on your walk, have your child draw objects that they find for each letter. You may have to help younger children with this if they are unfamiliar with letters and sounds. For some of the trickier letters, get creative... for "Q", maybe you spy a "quiet tree" or for "X", perhaps that bird whistle sounds like a "xylophone song"!

Tissue Paper Earth from the ART Activities section

This fun art activity is also wonderful practice for fine motor skills. You will need a piece of thin cardboard or card stock, blue and green tissue paper, and white craft glue. Cut a circle out of the card stock or cardboard to be your Earth. Either in advance of the project or with your child's help, cut or tear small square shapes out of the green and blue tissue paper. Squirt some glue onto a plate or small container, then show your child how to pinch a tissue paper square, dip it in the glue, and stick it to the Earth. One way that seems to work easily for small children is to stick their finger in the center of the square, pull up around it, and then use that finger to dip and press on to the Earth. Fill the entire earth with land and water and then hang in celebration!.

Parent Educator Notes from the Math Section

Why learn math this way?

Children are best able to learn complex mathematics concepts when they can practice them in real-life situations. While it may seem impressive for a child to complete a page full of addition problems while a timer counts down, in reality, this common "drill and kill" practice is generally not creating meaningful learning that your child will remember. Most importantly, they are rarely able to apply this knowledge to real life situations (which is the whole point we learn something anyway!). For learning to happen in a meaningful way that can be applied across a variety of situations, the new information and skills should be taught through a real-life situation.

What is the Math Focus in the "My Time" Theme?

Naturally, time is a mathematical concept, so most of the activities in the "My Time" math explorations section will have our child focusing on practicing the skills of telling time and understanding what various lengths of time represent. In addition, your child will practice some counting skills that will encourage higher level and double-digit math concepts.

Parent Educator Notes from the Math Section

What should my first grader know?

As mentioned in the introduction, many first graders are not developmentally ready to read an analog clock until later in the year and possibly even after that. Your child should, however, be able to comprehend different lengths of time and how they compare (i.e. a minute is much shorter than an hour), as well as a basic understanding of how days, weeks, and months progress.

How do I know my child is learning?

The understanding of time progression is generally filled with "Aha!" moments for a child, as it is an incredibly relatable, real-life skill. As they are practicing and learning how time moves and what it means for them as an individual, you will likely see a lot of "clicking" happening for your child. Typically, children are more able to understand the bigger concepts of time first (like how years separate them from their siblings, holidays are in specific months, etc.) and the understanding of the mathematics behind time (60 minutes in an hour, 5 minute intervals on the analog clock, etc.) come later on. Allow this to transition naturally for your child.

What Can You Do In...? Math Connections Activity

Key Learning

There are so many units of time to remember that it can be tricky for a child to keep everything straight. This activity helps your child understand what they can do in each unit of time, giving them a more concrete example to reference. Need: thick paper, scissors, colored pencils/crayons/markers

Directions

This activity is most fun to do in a flip book style, but can be easily done on individual pages or in a journal/notebook. For the flip book, fold a piece of paper in half vertically, and on the top side, cut across to make three or four individual flips on the page. Starting with a second, ask your child what they are able to do in that amount of time. Set a timer and show them how long one second is - obviously not much can happen in this short amount of time! Write "second" on the cover of the flip (or top of the page if you're using regular pages) and have your child draw or write what they could do in a second on the inside (or underneath the writing). Next, set a timer for a minute and brainstorm what types of things could be done in a minute, adding that to the flip book. Continue this activity, adding different units of time to the book - hour, day, week, month, year, etc.

Extension Idea

If your child has a pen pal or friend that they could do this activity with and compare, it can be really fun to see what another person's perspective is on what can be accomplished in a particular length of time.

Suggested Reading

A Second is a Hiccup by Hazel Hutchins
Just a Second by Steve Jenkins

Window Sprouts from Science Experiments Section

Key Learning

Watching seeds sprout is a wonderful way to observe changes over time, making it a fantastic and easy experiment to do during the "My Time" theme, no matter how many times you've done it before! Need: plastic sandwich bag, cotton balls, seeds (easily sprouting ones like bean seeds are best), water, tape

Directions

Have your child soak some seeds overnight in a glass of water - this helps to speed up the germination process, making for a faster sprouting experience. The next morning, place about five cotton balls in water and gently squeeze them so they aren't dripping, add them to the sandwich bag. Then, add in a couple of the seeds. Seal up the bag and tape it to a window that gets a lot of sunlight through the day. Make predictions for how long it will take until you see the seeds beginning to sprout. Each day, check on the seeds (taking observational notes about the process would be a great way to practice sequence writing, but simply talking about your observations will work just as well). Watch as they continue to grow and change over the course of about a week or more.

Extension Idea

Your child could use construction paper or window markers to turn the bag into a "house", creating a Sprout House creative project.

Suggested Reading

- Someday is Not a Day of the Week by Denise Brennan-Nelson
- Red Leaf, Yellow Leaf by Lois Ehlert

A Peek at My Day from the Creative Expressions Section

Key Learning

The best way for your child to learn a new concept is to find a way to relate it to their life. In this activity, your child will be associating the time of day with whatever they are doing in that exact moment, making telling time a very relatable skill! **Need:** small notebook or blank pages stapled together to make a small book, pencil/crayons/markers, clock

Directions

Each time you shout "Time Check" and your child writes down the time, prompt them to go to their journal/book to notate their current activity. Tell your child that they will be keeping a sort of diary/journal today to document what they do at different times throughout the day. At different points throughout the day, generally when activities have changed, have your child take a few moments to jot down the current time and either write or draw (or both!) what they are doing at that moment. Continue this throughout the day at various times, creating a daily "Peek at My Day" book/journal. At the end of the day, read your child's book together, having fun remembering all of the things that happened during the day.

Extension Idea

Try doing this activity on different days of the week, but keeping the prompt times the same to let your child compare how each day of the week is different and similar. If your child keeps the interest in the activity, you could create a "Peek at My Week" book combining the week's worth of daily journals!

Note

This activity pairs wonderfully with the Time Check activity in the math section! Do the activities at the same time on a day when you are likely to be home most of the day (or at least near a clock).

Suggested Reading

- Today is Monday by Eric Carle
- Someday is Not a Day of the Week
- by Denise Brennan-Nelson

Nature Photo Calendar in the Nature Explorations Section

Key Learning

While it is often easy for children to remember the seasons and the months of the year independently, it is sometimes a struggle to understand how these two units of time fit together. This year-long activity will help your child see the progression of the seasonal changes as each month passes by. **Need:** camera, basket

Note

This is, ideally, a year-long project and is best started in January, though it can be started at any time and completed for a year (or as long as your family chooses to have fun with this). Each month (ideally on/near the 1st as it is a great way to usher in and celebrate a new month's arrival), head out on a nature walk or hike with your child.

Directions

As you journey together, collect nature pieces that stand out to both of you - this might be wildflowers in bloom in the Spring, pinecones in the Winter, etc. When you've finished your walk or hike, use the natural items that you collected to write the name of the month on the ground. Snap a photo of the month word with your camera. Print and display this photo during the month, and save these throughout the year to create a nature calendar for the next year!

Extension Idea

These printed nature calendars (available through any number of online photo upload services) make wonderful family gifts around the holidays! If you give one to Grandma, have your child share their hiking experiences with each photo after the gift is open for an extra special gift.

Parent Notes from the Social Connections Section

Why learn math this way?

Especially in the first grade years as your child is discovering how they fit into the world around them, it is important that they begin to make social connections to their learning. Sometimes this includes connecting with others (i.e. "socialization"), but this is not the point of making social connections. Simply learning about how we are the same/different from those in the world around us helps to build awareness and connection.

What is the Social Connections Focus in the "My Time" Theme?

In this theme, your child will work to create their own working daily routine - a fantastic life skill, explore the concepts of the past and the present in social context, and connect with another culture through learning the days of the week in another language. While not directly interacting with others in these activities, they are building connections to other times and cultures.

What Should My First Grader Know?

Young first graders are often still quite "me-focused" in their thinking, and through the year will develop an understanding of how others around them feel, think, look, and interact with them and their environment. Through the "My Time" theme, your child will discover how others around the world are living their lives similarly at different times.

Create a Routine in the Social Connections Section

Key Learning

Though your family may have a great working routine, it can be a lot of fun to break from that and allow your child to have the opportunity to practice making a routine for the day. This is a wonderful way to explore time management and responsibility.

Need

paper/pencil/journal/big poster paper/calendar - you can get creative or keep it simple

Directions

If you don't already write out your family's current routine for your child to see, this would be a great way to introduce this activity - perhaps doing this for a few days before to allow for your child to see their routine in action.

Choose a day when you don't have anything in particular planned to allow your child to plot out the daily routine, giving them the opportunity to change things around, make plans, and even choose the meals for the day for extra fun! Help your child write their routine down, talking about length of time for activities and helping them understand and explore how much time might be needed for each activity they want to add to their routine. Have fun implementing the routine throughout the day!

Extension Idea

At the end of the day, talk with your child about how they feel their practice routine went - did they have time to do everything they planned? How was it similar or different from the usual family routine? Did something work so well that you want to add it permanently to the family routine? What didn't work well?

Excerpt from Resource & Suggested Supplement List

What Time Is It? Game

This game set comes with a wonderful "Judy clock" that is a great design for hands-on time telling practice.

Never Ending Stories

A classic, vintage game that explores the imagination and helps your child practice sequencing story-telling skills.

Big-Time Learning Clock

A large, easy to read clock with 5-minute markings to help your child make the connections to reading the minutes.

Excerpt from Suggested Reading List

This is a list of suggested books for this topic. They are not necessary for the activities and anything you can find similar to this list will be a great supplement/addition should you have trouble finding these texts. These are simply ideas to help support your "My Time" learning journey! Pick them up at your local library, bookstore, or order through an online retailer like Amazon.com. In this list you will find a variety of levels of text, allowing for a balance of read-alouds, read togethers, and independent readers. All are important for a meaningful literacy experience. *If you have a student ID through Bridge Academy, you can get extra Parent Educator discounts!!!*

- Sun-Day, Moon-Day: How the Week Was Made by Cherry Gilchrist
- An Illustrated Timeline of Inventions and Inventors by Kremena Spengler
- Sun-Day, Moon-Day: How the Week Was Made by Cherry Gilchrist
- Here Comes the Garbage Barge by Jonah Winter
- Me Counting Time: From Seconds to Centuries by Joan Sweeney
- At the Same Moment Around the World by Clotilde Perrin
- Two Little Gardeners by Margaret Wise Brown
- The Reasons for Seasons by Gail Gibbons
- Lessons from Mother Earth by Elaine McLeod
- Today is Monday by Eric Carle
- A Second is a Hiccup by Hazel Hutchins
- & more!

Watch a Learning Lab
from the MY BODY THEME!



Ready to purchase the curriculum, including parent notes & all 9 themes?

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FIRST GRADE CURRICULUM SCOPE & SEQUENCE

	September <i>My Body</i>	October <i>My World</i>	November <i>My Creative Self</i>	December <i>My Family</i>	January <i>My Neighborhood</i>	February <i>My Feelings</i>	March <i>My Time</i>	April <i>My Backyard</i>	May <i>My Animal Friends</i>
Literacy	text features, non-fiction text reading, verbs	story structure, story mapping	print features, illustrations/text art	text comparison, fairy tales, biographies	text details, comprehension, fiction vs non-fiction	forming and describing opinions, opinion writing	sequencing, informational writing	steps of a process, descriptive writing, journaling	poetry, fairy tales
Mathematics	measurement, addition (simple and complex), place value, more/less than, time	map making/reading, directions, spatial reasoning, geometry, money, fractions, measurement, time zones	perspective, geometry, lines, spatial reasoning	fact families, graphing, probability, place value	economics, money, large measurement (miles), graphing	fractions, more than/less than, weights, thermometer reading	telling time, double digit math	patterns, skip counting, charting, area, mapping	graphing, length, classification, money, scale
Science & Nature	body systems, healthy/diet, body autonomy, dental health, germs, exercise, parts of the plant	erosion, weather, environmental science, landforms,	problem solving, inventions, deconstruction, beauty in nature	kitchen science, migration, animal families, contrast in nature	observation, mapping, research skills, physics, habitats	emotional health, gardening, shadows	observing changes, plant growth, decomposition, landfills, seasonal changes	scientific inquiry, backyard nature, micro study, birds, soil composition, geology, plant growth, clouds	habitats, adaptations, biomes, animal communication, ocean zones, animal movement, interdependency, animal tracks
Art & Creativity	models, figure study	creating landforms, painting, sculpting	self-portraits, variety of mediums, abstract art, artist study	photography, family art, silhouettes	photography, construction, sketching, models	music, collage, emotional art, journaling	process art, creative journaling, recycled art	music, painting, artist study	imaginative creations, origami
Social Studies	mentorship, learning from experts	flags, cultures, map skills	social change, environmentalism	time capsule, genealogy	location information, safety plans	sharing kindness, personalities	routines, past and present comparison, language study	museum study, social kindness	inquiry, debate, volunteerism
Other	discussion skills, sharing your learning	cooking skills, GPS reading	self-expression, identity	genetics	creating a budget	problem solving, persistence	timelines	gardening	pet communication, pet care

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