

Making Connections

Curriculum Guide

Kindergarten

the **LernerSchool**
Learning for Life

As students enter Kindergarten at the Lerner School, they embark on a journey of self-discovery. Guided and free exploration is the cornerstone of the Kindergarten curriculum. Throughout the year, the children learn about themselves and their roles in their family, community, and world; this study extends through every component of the richly integrated curriculum. Ethics and Jewish values are taught and reinforced in every subject area, as the Kindergarten students explore how they can have an impact on the world we share.

LITERACY

Reading and writing are deeply connected, and Kindergarten students write for a variety of purposes throughout the day. Children learn that writing has meaning and that their words communicate their ideas to others. The Writing Workshop model allows students to express themselves while teaching the ways and habits of writers such as picture-text relationship, connecting words and sentences, and storytelling. Attention is also paid to letter formation, pencil grip, and spacing, and students practice using the Handwriting without Tears program.

Choral reading, rhythm and rhyme, songs, poetry, read-alouds, and small-group reading are just some of the ways Kindergarten students begin to interact with the written word. Our highly differentiated reading program meets all learners where they are and allows them to successfully build their “reader’s toolbox.” Kindergarteners learn phonics and the building blocks of reading through rotations or centers that include hands-on activities, multisensory Letterland instruction and practice, listening to Epic books (on Google Chromebooks), and guided reading.

Students are assessed on an ongoing basis to provide for their individual instructional needs.

Through a variety of activities and settings, some of the skills your child will study include:

- Sequence the letters of the alphabet
- Recognize sound/symbol relationships
- Identify sounds in beginning/medial/end positions in single syllable words
- Blend spoken onsets and rimes to form simple words (ex: /c/ (onset) and /at/ (rime)).
- Blend spoken phonemes to form one-syllable words (ex: /c/.../a/.../t/...says cat)
- Read Kindergarten high frequency words in isolation and in text
- Read aloud independent level texts with fluency/comprehension
- Make text based predictions
- Copy/write words from environment
- Use appropriate spacing between letters/words
- Use temporary spelling including beginning and ending consonant sounds
- Use vowel sounds within words
- Write text about pictures that represent own ideas
- Write simple or patterned sentences on a theme/topic

Resources we use include, but are not limited to:

- Letterland, Sitton Spelling, Fountas and Pinnell Phonics materials
- DRA Leveled Books and Wright Group Guided Reading texts
- Units of Study for Kindergarten Reading (Lucy Calkins Reader's Workshop)
- Units of Study for Primary Writing (Lucy Calkins Writer's Workshop)
- Handwriting Without Tears

MATH

Kindergarten students begin work in the Everyday Mathematics Program, which stresses flexible thinking, number sense, and creative problem solving. Games play a strong role in the Everyday Math Program, and are designed to support and extend conceptual understanding. Math concepts are utilized throughout the day and integrated with units of study across the curriculum. Our students are introduced to the IXL math practice website to enhance their math skills, and they follow individualized programs that track and reward their progress.

In Kindergarten, a few of the math concepts your child will work with include:

- Creating bar graphs and tally marks
- Recognizing, writing, ordering, and comparing numbers
- Exploring, classifying, and creating patterns
- Counting by 2s, 5s, and 10s
- Working with place value and exchanging between 1s, 10s and 100s
- Money math with pennies, nickels, and dimes
- Single-digit addition and subtraction
- Recognizing, describing, and sorting 2-D and 3-D shapes
- Telling time
- Measurement

SOCIAL STUDIES

As the overarching theme in Kindergarten is the Self, explorations in social studies focus on topics relevant to the children's daily lives. Families, community helpers, jobs and workplaces, and Jewish and secular holidays are a few of the units of study in Kindergarten. Social Studies concepts and themes weave themselves throughout the curriculum, as students read, write, discuss, play, and create.

SCIENCE

The study of Science at Lerner is a hands-on, inquiry-driven learning experience. Through the innovative STEMscopes Curriculum, coupled with teacher designed resources derived from a variety of sources, students are given opportunities to explore, ask questions, form hypotheses, experiment, and come to their own conclusions. Kindergarten science is a project-based curriculum utilizing the scientifically proven 5E Model: Engage, Explore, Explain, Evaluate, and Elaborate, and has its pedagogical roots in Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences. Science in Kindergarten draws heavily on the students' natural curiosity about the world and how things work, and is linked to content in all other subject areas. Kindergarteners will begin the year by studying the tools and methods of scientists, followed by in depth units on the properties of matter, nutrition, weather/ climate and the water cycle, and balance and motion. The learning experience is enhanced through use of our outdoor space, such as investigating the gardens and making observations about the weather using our "weather station."

JUDAIC STUDIES

Jewish Studies at Lerner fosters a love of tradition and community, builds a sense of values and responsibility to one another, engenders a strong Jewish identity, and creates confident Jewish learners and participants. Kindergarten children study holiday stories, customs, and symbols, “travel” all through modern Israel, embrace the Jewish values of kavod (respect), derech eretz (good manners), tikkun olam (repairing the world), and tzedakah (charity). This learning is reinforced in their secular studies, as when the brachot (blessings) we say before and after eating are linked to the study of nutrition. Kindergarten students will focus on Jewish symbols and klei kodesh, ritual objects, associated with the Jewish holidays and traditions. Each student will create a beautiful and detailed scrapbook of the holidays; families will participate in a “Holiday Museum” Family Program.

HEBREW

Hebrew language instruction in Kindergarten is a full body experience as the children listen to stories, sing songs, dance, follow Hebrew directions in games and activities, and much more. The focus during this year is vocabulary expansion and oral comprehension. Kindergarten students will learn the vocabulary associated with the Jewish Holidays and ritual objects, as well as discuss the daily weather and the calendar, seasons, body parts, and classroom objects. The Hebrew teacher works closely with the Kindergarten teachers to link vocabulary taught with relevant units of study across the curriculum, such as shapes, numbers, family roles, and food vocabulary.

SPOTLIGHT ON SPECIAL CELEBRATIONS

The Kindergarten plays a special role in Lerner celebrations. One of the highlights of the Kindergarten year is the Q-U wedding, where Q and U wed to make wonderful words like quilt, quiet, and quest. Preparations for the wedding integrate Judaic Studies, Hebrew, phonics, spelling, creative writing, math (focus on the number seven), social studies (wedding traditions throughout the world), science (how to build a well-balanced Chuppah), art, PE (practicing the Hora), and various forms of hands on learning. With the help of their fifth grade book buddies, the Kindergarten students build a Chuppah and participate in a ceremony that incorporates the rituals of a formal Jewish wedding, culminating in the class dancing the Hora. They even have a model Ketubah and gifts from the other classes, as well as an exchange of ring pops and stepping on a glass (plastic cup)! The Q-U wedding is an example of how Kindergarten at Lerner helps children practice core skills, learn important content in multiple areas, engage in accessible Jewish studies, and have fun!