

PROGRAM OVERVIEW AT-A-GLANCE



A Quick Overview

To encourage students to reach their highest academic, creative, and personal potential, first grade at Park Maitland provides an atmosphere that is intellectually stimulating. We know that students will learn, grow, and be successful with our support; therefore, it is our daily goal to provide these eager scholars with the skills and experiences they require to build their confidence and abilities.

With the needs of every 21st century learner in mind, daily curriculum is enhanced through an intentional focus towards developing the 4Cs: creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration. These competencies are nurtured and built upon in a carefully crafted continuum throughout each Park Maitland student's journey, ultimately preparing him or her to be a productive asset in a global society.

Evidences of the 4Cs at this level include assignments and tasks across our curriculum where the first grade student will do the following:

Build Creativity

- Use different modes of communication to explain new ideas
- Begin to link seemingly unrelated ideas
- Apply existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products, or processes

Build Critical Thinking

- Use the Design Thinking Process to guide his/her learning
- Formulate more idea-oriented, conceptual questions based on prior knowledge (with teacher guidance)
- Use strategies to narrow a list of ideas
- Wonder "why" based on observations/experiences with more focus on relevancy to topic or context

Build Communication

- Engage with, and choose from various modes of communication
- Use features, conventions, and etiquette of interactive communication environments
- Speak effectively in front of a group
- Articulate thoughts and ideas accurately and effectively through oral, written, or multimedia communications

Build Collaboration

- Organize and gather team materials more independently
- Suggest new ideas
- Ask various questions to the group and teacher to seek shared ideas and understanding
- Adapt to team member roles as both leader and follower



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**PARK MAITLAND
SCHOOL**

Excellence Begins in Wonder

Course Descriptions:

Language Arts: Reading and E.S.W (English, Spelling, and Writing)

Reading

Park Maitland first graders officially start their journey as lifelong readers. This is done through the sensitive and loving guidance of a teacher who know that the students are all at different places on the road that leads to fluent reading. The facilitator provides the students with a firm foundation in reading while teaching high level comprehension strategies. This combination is the key to encouraging students to improve their reading fluency.

Acknowledging the reciprocal relationship between comprehension and fluency, our curriculum employs classroom activities and strategies to universally build both skills. Since reading fluency includes elements such as the rate at which a child reads, the expression they use when reading, the attention they give to punctuation, and the rate of accuracy which they read words, it is important to place students within their zone of proximal development. We do this by ensuring that children are enjoying literature at their own fluency level. Students are encouraged to work in small fluid groups so that they are able to delight in books that are just right for them and to interact with their peers as they discuss these stories.

In the first grade reading classroom, discussing literature is highlighted as a group activity that brings focus to effective communication and collaboration. Through these literary discussions and meetings with the teacher, the students develop comprehension strategies that help them make meaning from the text. In addition, the students become word collectors, learning the definitions of new words and ultimately using them in their writing.

E.S.W

The first graders also start to build the skills it takes to become strong writers. To do this they are given expert and explicit instruction, time to write, and the tools that help them organize their thoughts as they go through the writing process.

Park Maitland's writing program offers individualized attention to each writer as they develop their skills. The teacher realizes that every student has his/her own unique writing abilities, and encourages the students to set goals that will help them as they hone their craft. Our method is to guide the students, meeting with them one on one to discuss their writing. During these meaningful sessions, students are provided with constructive suggestions of ways to express themselves in written form.



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Other aspects of our E.S.W. course include lessons where foundational writing conventions are addressed:

The students learn the usage and mechanics of the English language, concepts such as sentence structure, the parts of speech, and the proper use of capital letters and punctuation.

Student spelling skills grow as they utilize the phonetic patterns and sounds to spell the words they are writing.

Letter formation, proper use of lined paper, and correct pencil positioning are important skills that continue to be refined in first grade.

Ultimately, the first grader will emerge from this dynamic experience having learned to *write what they read and read what they write*.

Math

Park Maitland's first graders use the second grade level of the Saxon math program. We find that the spiral presentation offered by this curriculum allows each student to learn at his/her own pace. The hands-on approach to the concepts and the variety of opportunities provided to practice help the students master the material presented.

The teacher realizes that students need to develop a solid understanding of numeration. Furthermore, all learners benefit greatly when they are fluent in their math facts. This is why each concept is built off of the foundational concepts that came before, providing the students with a depth of understanding and allowing for the creative hands-on activities that support the curriculum.

From recognizing and counting money, to measuring segments and understanding fractions and place values, each math class is adorned with multiple opportunities to practice the skills and concepts students have learned. Given these creative and fun ways to practice, students are continually on the road to mastering new knowledge.

Overall, it is the Park Maitland aim to expose our students to high level math concepts as they begin to realize that they really are mathematicians.



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Science and Social Studies

Park Maitland integrates the Science and Social Studies curriculum and presents this powerful duo through hands-on learning experiences. The students often work in cooperative groups tasked with discovering the world around them and the many cultures that make up this world. They enjoy using the concepts they are mastering in other classes as they post entries in their journals, record their experiments, and research the featured topics. Many of the units being studied are concluded with a celebration or field trip. Some of these special experiences include the following:

- A field trip to the Brevard Zoo where children are able to visit with the animals that live on the different continents they have studied.
- The first graders celebrate the Harvest Festival at the end of the First Thanksgiving unit. This celebration focuses on the garden and the bounty that is harvested from it. Of course, we incorporate the many things and people for which students are thankful. This celebration allows the students to showcase all they learned in this area of study with their parents.
- The Festival of Nations is a celebration of the countries and the cultures studied throughout the course of the year.
- The Science Expo offers the students the opportunity to share their experiments, creations, and research with the whole school community.

Our first graders learn that they are a part of a huge world with a wide variety of cultures and experiences waiting for them.

Enrichment Classes

Enrichment subjects, taught by teachers who specialize in the area that they are instructing, round out the rich offering of classes for all of our grade levels. These teachers pass on their passion for their area of expertise to the students. The enrichment classes our students enjoy are listed below:

- **Physical education:** The students are taught a wide variety of both individual and team physical education skills, and they learn to show good sportsmanship, working collaboratively as a team.
- **Swimming:** Our first graders build their swimming skills as they move from being safe swimmers to mastering all of the basic strokes. In addition, they are introduced to basic water safety.
- **Daily recess/free play time :** Recess time is provided each day where students enjoy free play time as they build memories with their friends.



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- **Art:** The goal of the art program is to inspire our artists to express themselves visually while they think, explore, and experiment with a variety of media.
- **Music:** The students are exposed to a wide variety of musical experiences as they learn to develop a love for and an appreciation of music.
- **Drama:** Our budding performers are encouraged to think creatively and express themselves as they enjoy showcasing their acting abilities.
- **Tinkering Lab :** 21st century skills will guide curriculum driven projects as students discover how to explicitly apply the design thinking process to solve problems, meet needs, and provide structure, curation, and reflection to their learning.
- **Spanish:** The students are immersed into the Spanish language and culture as they build their vocabulary through a variety of hands-on, fun activities.
- **Media Center:** The Park Maitland library is here to help every student develop a love of reading, become a skilled user of ideas and information, and to explore the world through print and electronic media. The students become familiar with computers as they use software and internet sites to support the curriculum presented in other classes. These technological natives will also utilize iPads as a learning tool in many of their lessons across curriculum areas. Every Park Maitland teacher recognizes the power of the technological platform to spur and drive instruction as students research and explore their ideas.

Something Very Special...

Park Maitland School is known for our meaningful traditions. One such tradition takes place in the first grade as students enjoy a very special bond with a sixth grade "Jelly Fudge Friend!" The students have activities together throughout the school year, and the bonds they forge often last into their teenage years. This opportunity to connect and learn from a mentor provides emotional benefits for both parties involved.

