



# FIRST GRADE



"The beginning is the most important part of the work." ~Plato



First Grade at Covenant is a year of building, strengthening, and preparing for the future. It is here that we build a solid foundation of basic skills that will uphold academic progress for years to come. First graders learn through active, purposeful interactions with a wide variety of learning materials and activities which develop the growth of the whole child. Because young children are concrete learners, they need to be able to learn by using their senses and actively engaging with the curriculum. By combining hands-on learning with classical methods of direct instruction, repetition, recitation and memorization, we are able to tap the potential in all of our young students. First graders are building an essential foundation comprised of skills in the areas of social/emotional development, language and literacy, motor control, citizenship in a community, creative expression and of course academic skills and knowledge.

If you peeked into the First Grade Classroom you might see...

- Children engaged with learning materials such as unifix cubes, pattern blocks, pencils, crayons, paper, glue, letter magnets, trade books, white boards, legos, etc. as they work together and independently to discover the world around them.
- Voices chanting in unison: “ought, ought, ought as in thought, o-u-g-h-t” as the class learns the phonics charts and applies the rules of spelling thus opening themselves up to the world of reading.
- Eager hands reaching for a new book, their heads then bending together as they share the joy of reading, perhaps laughing over an amusing part of the story.
- Children sitting on the carpet around their teacher, eyes fastened and ears attuned to the beauty of a great work of literature, either classic or contemporary, being read aloud.
- Pairs of 7-year olds taking turns being blindfolded and guided down the hallway, groping, hesitating, self-consciously laughing as they try to experience what it feels like to be blind.
- Very gentle first graders oh-so carefully carrying their caterpillar cups to their desks, observing the caterpillars, then journaling their observations with words and pictures. A trip to The Butterfly Place is eagerly anticipated as the culmination of this beloved unit, one of many in which children learn about God's world and his creation.
- A circle of young bodies sitting quietly, heads bowed, as they take turns praying for those in need and giving gratitude to God for his blessings. Later, the same group will eagerly share the joy and pride of a newly lost tooth, or a special birthday is acknowledged with a birthday book, made by their peers, as they strengthen their awareness of what it means to be a community.
- Children rolling some dice to challenge partners with an addition or subtraction problem. Or perhaps a group of children working with place value discs, where they are experiencing hands-on the concept of place value.
- Children learning about their God and Creator by exploring the truths evident in His holy, inspired word and worshiping Him through music, prayer and recitation of scripture.
- Children laughing, running, climbing, and learning to play together daily through both organized and free outdoor play.

